

California Green Lodging Program

What is a Green Hotel? Green Best Practices for Hotels

These are easy-to-use lists of green practices that will help you learn about what makes a hotel green, and also help hotels assess their environmental commitment and performance. Topics include: Commitment to Environmental Practices, Recycling and Reuse, Energy Efficiency and Conservation, Lighting, Water Efficiency and Conservation, Landscape, Pest Management, Hazardous and Toxic Substances, Transportation, and Purchasing.

Commitment to Environmental Practices

- ✓ Hotel forms an Environmental Committee that is responsible for developing an Environmental Green Plan for energy, water, and solid waste use.
 - ✓ Hotel forms a Green Team that is responsible for ensuring that all the environmental practices, in which the hotel is participating, are being performed timely and correctly. A Green Team is usually comprised of individuals from each area of the hotel, namely: Housekeeping, Engineering, Kitchen, Front Office, Maintenance, and Upper Management.
 - ✓ Hotel manages their environmental performance by monitoring the electric, gas, water, and waste usage information on a monthly and annual basis.
 - ✓ Hotel's environmental efforts are visibly communicated to the guests, staff, shareholders, vendors, and to the public.
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Recycling and Reuse

- ✓ Recycling receptacles clearly marked for aluminum, glass, plastic, mixed paper, cardboard, newspaper, and toner cartridges.
- ✓ Receptacles are located in the following areas: office/administrative area, lobby/registration, and guest rooms.
- ✓ Do not deliver newspapers to each occupied room unless requested. Have the newspapers located in the lobby and available to whomever.
- ✓ Make two-sided printing and copying standard practice in your business.
- ✓ Keep a stack of previously used paper near printers; use it for drafts, scratch paper or internal memos.
- ✓ Reduce unwanted mail by calling senders requesting removal from lists.

- ✓ Use electronic files rather than paper ones.
 - ✓ Select products shipped with less packaging and/or easily recyclable packaging.
 - ✓ Switch to bulk-dispensed amenities. This helps to eliminate hundreds of pounds of plastic containers and packaging daily from individual shower bottles and soap.
 - ✓ Donate used amenity bottles and containers to charity or local shelters.
 - ✓ Offer optional linen and towel reuse programs to multiple night guests.
 - ✓ Recycle and/or compost food and landscape waste; set up green waste and composting service with local garbage company.
 - ✓ Donate non-perishable foods to shelters and other charitable organizations.
 - ✓ Use biodegradable key cards—100% biodegradable product will completely decompose in a landfill or compost within 18 months.
 - ✓ Use corn key cards—manufactured from domestically grown, 100% biodegradable annually renewable corn.
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Energy Efficiency and Conservation

- ✓ Install occupancy (motion) sensors or timers in low traffic areas.
 - ✓ Use energy-efficient light bulbs, such as compact florescent lights (CFL).
 - ✓ Install energy efficient equipment; use electrical equipment with energy saving features, such as Energy Star.
 - ✓ Use renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, and geothermal power when possible.
 - ✓ Install programmable thermostat.
 - ✓ Perform regular maintenance on HVAC equipment.
 - ✓ Evaluate insulation in ceilings and as insulation, as needed.
 - ✓ Install energy efficient, double-pane windows or use natural light from the sun to reduce energy consumption throughout the day.
 - ✓ Add window film to windows to reduce energy loss and solar heat emissions through windows.
 - ✓ Install ceiling fans to promote air circulation and reduce the need for air conditioning.
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Lighting

- ✓ Install programmable sensors/timers for lighting in low traffic areas.
- ✓ Use occupancy sensors to detect the presence or absence of people.
- ✓ Create reminder cards for guests and staff to turn off lights when leaving a room.
- ✓ Clean light fixtures and diffusers regularly for optimal light output.
- ✓ Use only natural lighting during daytime hours.
- ✓ Replace incandescent bulbs with energy efficient light bulbs, such as compact florescent lights (CFL).
- ✓ Use dimmer controls in meeting rooms.
- ✓ Improve exit sign energy efficiency. Use light-emitting diode (LED) exit signs.

Water Efficiency and Conservation

- ✓ Replace all pre-1992 toilets with 1.6 gpf toilets or less.
- ✓ Replace all urinals with models that flush at no more than 1.0 gpf.
- ✓ Install low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators. Flow rates shall not exceed 2.2 gpm for faucets and aerators and 2.5 gpm for low-flow showerheads.
- ✓ Post signs in restrooms, restaurants, and kitchen areas encouraging water conservation.
- ✓ Implement an optional linen and towel reuse program for guests.
- ✓ Regularly check for leaks and repairs.
- ✓ Clothes washers, dryers and dishwashers are filled to recommend capacity for each cycle.
- ✓ Use the coolest water temperature for washers, dryers and dishwashers.

Landscape

- ✓ Test irrigation system to ensure proper operation and watering schedule. Adjust sprinklers for proper coverage to optimize space and avoid runoff onto paved surfaces.
- ✓ Install a drip irrigation system which uses low volume irrigation.
- ✓ Adjust sprinkler times and/or durations according to season; water during non-daylight hours to limit evaporation.
- ✓ Landscape with drought resistant plants; plant California-friendly and native plants.
- ✓ Group plants with similar water requirements together on the same irrigation line, and separate plants with different water requirements on separate irrigation lines.
- ✓ Landscape your property with trees and plants that tolerate the climate, soil and water availability.
- ✓ Specify that sidewalks, drives, and parking lots are swept rather than watered.
- ✓ Use organic fertilizers and soil amendments.

Pest Management

- ✓ Implement a green integrated-pest management (IPM) program that allows less reliance on chemical treatments.
 - ✓ Use organic insecticides and biocides or IPM techniques for the interior and exterior of the hotel property.
 - ✓ Monitor pests and identify them accurately so that appropriate control decisions can be made.
 - ✓ Use organic cleaners in drains to eliminate the grease and grime that some flies and insects use as a food source and breeding area.
 - ✓ Pick weeds by hand rather than using herbicides (weed killers).
 - ✓ Use traps, containerized baits, gels and/or barriers for ants and cockroaches.
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Hazardous and Toxic Substances

- ✓ Store all chemical products in their original containers with tight fitting lids. Store in a secure location away from ignition sources and food storage areas.
- ✓ Use the least toxic cleaning products and substances as possible.
- ✓ Use recycled content or low volatile organic compound (VOC) paint products.
- ✓ Use products that are lead free, biodegradable, have low toxicity, low VOC, mercury free, recyclable, less hazardous, and durable.
- ✓ Use less-toxic graffiti removers.
- ✓ Purchase laundry detergent with little or no phosphates.
- ✓ Print materials with soy or other low VOC inks.
- ✓ Utilize a household hazardous waste drop off site for materials that cannot be thrown in the trash or poured down the drain, such as aerosol cans, electronics, paint, batteries, toner cartridges, chemicals, and compact florescent lights.
- ✓ Use rechargeable batteries instead of disposable alkaline battery.

Transportation

- ✓ Provide a secure location for staff to store bicycles.
- ✓ Provide ridesharing information on carpooling, vanpooling, bicycling, walking and public mass transportation.
- ✓ Encourage alternative modes of transportation via incentives.
- ✓ Offer telecommuting opportunities or flexible work schedules.
- ✓ Perform local errands on bike or foot.
- ✓ Provide hotel commuter van or shuttle service to and from airports.
- ✓ Provide preferential parking for alternative modes of transportation, such as carpools, electric, hybrid or bio-diesel vehicles.

Purchasing

- ✓ Create an environmental purchasing policy; train your employees on the environmental purchasing policy and procedures.
 - ✓ Purchase recycled content products, such as office paper, envelopes, post-it notes, paper towels, toilet paper, remanufactured toner cartridges, carpet, construction materials and much more.
 - ✓ Purchase used equipment.
 - ✓ Purchase Energy Star appliances wherever possible.
 - ✓ Inform your vendors/suppliers that you prefer eco-friendly products.
 - ✓ Preferences are given to environmentally responsible suppliers.
 - ✓ Purchase durable goods of sufficient quality to allow reuse, refinishing and/or upholstering.
 - ✓ Purchase preferences are given to reusable, minimal, or recyclable packaging and shipping pallets.
 - ✓ Purchase supplies, products, and condiments in bulk.
 - ✓ Purchase local, organic, and environmentally-friendly food from vendors.
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