

# Social Welfare Department

## Environmental Report 2013

### Introduction

This report sets out the green measures taken by the department in 2013.

### Policy and Objectives

2. As a government department and a member of the community, we are committed to supporting Government's policies on environmental protection and sustainable development. To this end, our objectives are to promote a green culture among staff of the department and our working partners and to do our best in adopting green management and practices in our workplace.

### Green Measures Adopted in 2013

3. During the year, the department has made continuous efforts in cultivating and fostering a personal responsibility among staff members for the care of the environment. While most of our operation units are office-based, we have endeavoured to adopt good office practices aiming at reducing the use of, reusing as well as recycling valuable resources such as paper and energy.

4. As part of our commitment to sustainability, we have uploaded a wealth of Green Tips onto our intranet to raise staff awareness on and encourage office participation in waste minimisation, waste recovery and energy conservation. To further ascertain the extent of compliance, the department has conducted its annual e-survey on green housekeeping measures and the survey findings for the year are summarised below.

<b>I. Reduce</b>	
Control of paper consumption	<p>Since paper is the major resource consumed in our offices, continuous efforts have been made to reduce consumption of photocopying paper through wider use of electronic communication.</p> <p>Despite the establishment of a number of new offices in 2013, the department managed to reduce paper consumption by 1 845 reams in 2013 to 7 1356 reams, of which 92% is recycled paper.</p>
Use of electronic platform	<p>All offices have been equipped with email facility. It has become a standard practice to circulate reference documents by email</p>

	<p>instead of hardcopies.</p> <p>To further reduce the department's carbon footprint, we have opted for the electronic version of key government publications such as the Policy Address and the Budget to allow for paperless distribution within the department.</p> <p>Our offices have been reminded to reduce the production of printed publications and encouraged to upload publications onto the department's homepage for public access.</p> <p>Documents for internal circulation are uploaded onto the departmental intranet portal for viewing by staff. Staff members are advised to collect and submit returns in electronic format through the portal.</p> <p>Our offices have also adopted the green practice of drafting documents in soft copies.</p>
Double-sided printing	We have reduced our office stationery needs by printing on both sides of paper. Newly procured photocopiers and printers are equipped with double-sided printing function.
Phase out thermal fax	Thermal fax machines have been phased out to reduce the need of making a second copy of fax for filing. All offices are provided with plain paper fax machines.
Minimise the use of envelopes	Our offices have stopped using envelopes for despatching unclassified documents.
Reduce consumables	<p>Staff members are encouraged to use their own cups and drinking glasses instead of disposable paper cups. Refillable ball pens and clutch pencils are widely used in our offices to minimise waste.</p> <p>The department has also encouraged staff members to use electronic greeting cards in replacement of printed cards on festive occasions.</p>
Electricity conservation	Guidelines on saving electricity through economic use of lighting, air-conditioning, photocopiers and computer equipment have been issued to all offices.

	<p>Our offices have maintained air-conditioning temperature set point at 25.5°C in summer months to lower energy demands. It is our practice to carry out routine checks to ensure computers and office equipment are switched off during lunch breaks and after office hours. In addition, we have accelerated the adoption of energy-efficient and low-carbon technologies in our offices, such as motion sensor lighting and electric vehicles, to reduce energy consumption in our daily operation.</p> <p>Electricity consumption level is being closely monitored at all times.</p>
Water demand management	Timed taps and dual-flush flushing cisterns have been installed in some of our toilets in order to reduce water usage and more importantly, reduce sewage generation.

## II. Reuse and Recycle

Reuse envelopes and file jackets	It is a standard practice in our offices to reuse envelopes and file jackets that are in good condition.
Use recycled paper	Recycled paper is used in most of our offices.
Use single-sided paper for drafts	Single-sided paper is used for drafts and printing internal documents.
Set up green trays next to photocopiers and LAN printers	Green trays are set up next to photocopiers and LAN printers to facilitate printing with paper that has been used on one side.
Recycle waste paper	Waste paper is collected for recycling as our regular practice. The department has collected a total of 1 116 kg of waste paper for the purpose in 2013, which is over 3 times more than that of 2012.
Recycle toners	It is our standard practice to return used toners of laser printers to suppliers for recycling.
Provision of recycle bins	Recycle bins are provided in offices for collecting waste paper, cans, bottles and unwanted CDs.

## III. Other green initiatives

Continuous monitoring	Periodic surveys are carried out to gauge the extent of adoption of green measures by individual offices and to monitor their improvement over time.
Departmental guidelines	Guidelines on green office practices are in place for

	reference by all offices.
Green procurement	It is a mandatory requirement for our cleansing contractors to use biodegradable garbage bags. The use of correction fluid and batteries with mercury, which may cause hazards to environment, are discouraged in our offices.
<b>IV. Promotion of green message/practice to Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs)</b>	
Use of homepage	Circulars and documents relevant to NGOs are promulgated through the department's homepage.
Electronic communication	The department has promoted the use of electronic communication with NGOs.
Regular returns and submissions	NGOs have formed the practice of filing returns in electronic format.

#### **Comments**

5. We welcome any comments or suggestions on this report. Please send them to [admenq@swd.gov.hk](mailto:admenq@swd.gov.hk)

**Social Welfare Department**

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