

Member Profile

Trace Associates Inc.

Being an environmental consulting firm, Trace Associates Inc. (Trace) understands that business goals and environmental goals can be achieved simultaneously. In this article, we hope to share some success stories that will encourage other members to look at ways to improve their own environmental performance. Trace's goal is to be an industry leader in waste reduction, which has also helped us improve our financial bottom line, has kept employees engaged, and made us a "greener" company.

One of the major strides Trace made to reduce waste-to-landfill was to remove under-the-desk garbage cans company-wide. Instead, all employees are given two small (<2 L) desk-top bins – one for garbage and one for compost. Garbage, compostables, and recycling are placed in centralized waste, recycling, and compost stations set up in each office. Our Lethbridge office is even home to a vermicomposting family of worms, affectionately known as "the Duggers." This system makes throwing things into the garbage more difficult than recycling or composting, and helps bring awareness to the amount of "true" garbage that employees produce in a day.



Of course, recycling / composting isn't enough – eliminating waste right up front is the key to a successful reduction strategy. To help choose the most environmentally and socially responsible supplies, Trace developed and uses a "Responsible Purchasing for Equipment & Supplies – Guideline Tool" that ranks purchase options based on metrics such as overall lifespan, percentage of recycled content, distance travelled from manufacture, and end-of-life options. This simple tool assists front-line purchasers and managers in considering environmental and social factors alongside those of cost, and educates staff on issues related to responsible purchasing.

Creating a green supply chain is also an important aspect of Trace's commitment to environmental protection. To that end, Trace exclusively uses 100% post-consumer recycled paper, made in a Canadian facility that is powered by biogas. Courier services are evaluated based on their environmental programs and ability to demonstrate environmental responsibility. Office renovations are completed with the minimal amount of demolition, and unneeded office supplies or equipment are donated to local charities.

Finally, Trace is a firm believer in learning through information sharing. Our Environmental Event Reporting

system provides easy-to-read feedback relating to environmental incidents and near misses, and also recognizes positive actions by staff. These reports are shared with all staff, and with clients where appropriate.

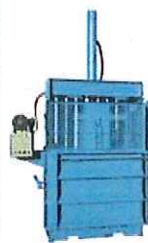
All in all, the success of our waste minimization program can be attributed to management commitment and employee engagement / involvement at all levels. We encourage other RCA members to consider both the business and environmental aspects of your decisions, and you too should see an improvement in your financial and environmental bottom line.

For more information on Trace, contact our Corporate Social Responsibility Coordinator, Tami Rothery, at 403.217.3747 ext. 213.

submitted by Tami Rothery, Trace Associates Inc.



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