

South African businesses urged to recycle paper

Estimates from the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) predict total paper consumption to rise from the current 400 million tons to between 450 million and 500 million tons by 2020. As a result, South African businesses are being urged to realise the vast environmental and business benefits of recycling unwanted paper, as paper consumption shows no signs of abating.



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This is according to Dorota Boltman, divisional director of Rainbow Paper Management, a group company of JSE listed Metrofile Holdings Limited. Boltman says that industrialised paper making negatively effects the environment in two ways - deforestation to make the paper, and the unnecessary use of landfill space. "Approximately 90% of paper pulp is made of wood equating to 35% of all trees felled going towards paper production and paper waste accounts for 35% of global municipal landfill space."

Easy to implement recycling

The case for recycling paper is multiple: a cleaner environment, job creation, reduced costs to local authorities, decrease necessity to import raw materials and freeing up space at landfill sites. Boltman says there are many benefits for business that recycle paper. "Recycling at work helps reduce the environmental impact of the organisation because it means the paper can be used again in new products and applications, instead of simply going to landfill space."

She says recycling also saves space and can reduce clutter in the office resulting in an improved working environment. "It's actually really easy to implement a recycling initiative in the workplace by simply placing recycle bins in convenient locations, such as close to employees' desks or printers. Workplaces can even reuse envelopes for internal circulation.

"Once all employees are effectively educated about the recycling process in the workplace it can increase employee morale as staff then feel proud to belong to an organisation that embodies environmentally sound values and gives attention towards its environmental impact and responsibilities," concludes Boltman.

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