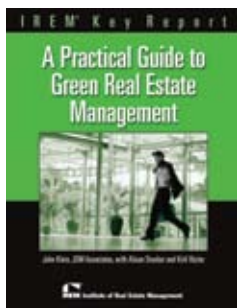


COMMUNICATE TO EDUCATE Make sure the men, women & children in your buildings are included in sustainability efforts



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PURCHASE A COPY OF THE IREM KEY REPORT A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO GREEN REAL ESTATE MANAGEMENT AT WWW.IREM.ORG.



THROUGHOUT THE LAST SEVERAL ISSUES OF *JPM*, WE'VE DISCUSSED THERMOSTATS, LIGHTING SYSTEMS AND PLUG LOADS IN RELATION TO REDUCING ENERGY USE AND COSTS. NOW LET'S TALK ABOUT THE BIGGEST USERS OF ENERGY IN BUILDINGS: PEOPLE.

At any given moment, energy, water and resources are being wasted: Lights are on when people go to lunch or space heaters are used while the building air conditioning is running, to name a few. Avoid undermining your sustainability efforts by raising tenants' awareness so that their day-to-day activities complement your green efforts (even if they are independently paying for energy).

This is not costly or time-consuming. There are simple ways to promote sustainability while respecting occupants' rights and needs. Ideally, you should provide information that can be applied both in the workplace and at home. As their environmental consciousness is raised, tenant employees may share these practices with family and friends.

In your buildings, let tenants know you are proactive about sustainability by discussing your current initiatives and long-term goals. If you have ENERGY STAR or LEED certifications, display and promote them. Also speak to financial motivations, explaining how energy and water efficiency, and lower waste production, can reduce costs. Reference the ENERGY STAR Web site (www.energystar.gov), which has calculators to determine the financial savings associated with energy-efficient office equipment. Finally, foster the belief that softening one's impact on the environment is just the right thing to do.

Once tenants are on board, coordinate with

tenant representatives, office managers and enthusiastic individuals to create a plan. Find and develop champions—suggest that tenants designate a different employee each week or month to be the office "Energy Czar" who will ensure that equipment and lights are turned off at night.

Consider establishing a schedule of e-newsletters to distribute to tenants, each discussing a different aspect of sustainability. Mention how in warmer months, tenants can reduce cooling costs by closing window shades, and in colder months, reduce heating costs by keeping shades open.

Display signs in high-traffic areas like break or copier rooms, reminding employees of basic energy-saving behaviors such as shutting off computer monitors when they leave their desks. If you have motion sensors or other energy-saving devices, explain what they do and show tenants the difference between energy efficiency and the old standard.

Make it fun! Create contests and competitions with social events or gift certificates as a reward for tenants' efforts. Challenge tenant companies to have as many employees as possible sign the ENERGY STAR Pledge, which commits individuals to take small actions to conserve energy.

Hold special events to further engage tenants in sustainability efforts. Invite green vendors to participate in an educational lobby fair or lunch-and-learn. Invite tenant office managers, executives or other interested individuals to come learn about building-wide initiatives and consider applying the same principles within their spaces and at home.

Try these and other strategies to help lessen the impact that men, women and children have on the environment, and to complement your sustainability program. ■