


Top tips for greener funeral homes

by Martin Smith - NAFD Environmental Consultant

We all know the obvious ways to save energy and resources such as recycling waste, boiling only as much water as you need in the kettle and supporting your community by purchasing from local suppliers. Here are a few green tips that may give owners of funeral homes some ideas about how to save money and be more sustainable in their day-to-day activities.

- Delay throwing things away. If something needs to be replaced check first to see whether it can be repaired or if a suitable second-hand one is available.
- Make sure equipment and appliances are used properly to minimise energy and water use. If you need to buy new equipment look for the most energy efficient.
- Use environmentally friendly goods whenever possible. FSC paper and stationery is widely available and can be cheaper than traditional products.
- Low energy lamps can last up to ten times longer than old style bulbs and each one can save as much as £40 over its lifetime.
- Turn off electrical equipment and lights when not in use. Each electrical appliance left on standby or unnecessarily on charge costs around £10 per year.
- Use email communication whenever possible and encourage your suppliers to use paperless billing. Print only when necessary using environmentally friendly inks and use both sides of the paper.
- Put -  Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail - at the end of your emails.

- If your boiler is more than fifteen years old, replacing it with a high efficiency condensing boiler could cut your heating bills by up to a third.
- Check all pipes for leaks and get them fixed. Minimise general water usage and use biodegradable cleaning products, reusable cloth rags and paper towels and bin liners with recycled content.

Nowadays, almost anything can be recycled and general waste from your funeral home can be significantly reduced by recycling used printer paper and cartridges as well as plastic, metal, glass, mobile phones, computers and other old equipment.

FAQ: HOW CAN I REDUCE THE COST OF MY ENERGY BILL?

- **Turn off equipment when it's not being used** – It costs more than £50 a year to have one computer and monitor running 24 hours-a-day. Switching off or putting equipment on stand-by when it's not being used is likely to prolong its life and reduce the running cost to around £15 a year.
- **Switch off lights in empty rooms** – reduce the cost of lighting by as much as 15%, just by switching off lights in rooms and corridors when they're not in use.
- **Don't heat unused space** - corridors and storage areas don't need to be as warm as rooms where people spend more time. When an area is used for physical

work the heating can be reduced. Turn off the heating over the weekend if no-one is in the building.

- **Only increase the temperature when it's really necessary** - keep your thermostat at 19°C. Heating costs increase by 8% each time the temperature is increased by just one degree.

The National Association of Funeral Directors' Environmental Advisory Group will encourage and support members of the trade association in developing good practice within the funeral industry in matters relating to the environment.

