

## Paper Reduction Strategies

**Paperless approvals:** Saves staff time spent routing paper through all authorization points, physical filing space, often reduces total processing time.

**Paperless collaboration:** Sharepoint offers significant benefits for staff in the way of version control, document tracking, and time saved searching for latest versions.

- Use email instead of printed inter-office memos, mail or scanned documents when possible.
- Share newsletters and other information electronically instead of mailing paper copies.
- Use SharePoint to store signed/final documents.
- Limit the distribution of correspondence and documents to those who really need paper copies.

**Paperless Filing:** Maintain historical record via original electronic files (intentionally not creating duplicate paper files) not only enables quick and easy searches for public disclosure request, but also makes records retention/storage much simpler (via ERMS).

**Paperless Meetings:** Saves staff time spent transcribing, drafting, and editing notes/minutes.

- Use a laptop instead of paper for note taking. Projecting notes as you take them invites instant correction from group.
- Rather than making handouts, send the documents electronically a day or two beforehand so attendees can either decide they do not need to have it at the meeting or they can bring it in the form of their choosing (digital or hard copy).
- Use overhead projection of agendas and handouts, and follow up with electronic attachments or even just network links, rather than hardcopy distribution at the meeting.
- Just in time printing for regular meetings: last minute review of attendees can inform how many copies are actually needed (assuming you must print).
- If possible, read meeting materials online in advance of the meeting, rather than printing and taking them. If you do have to bring copies, only print the sections/pages you really need.
- Don't print and hand out entire documents when a summary will suffice.
- Confirm the number of attendees before meetings and print out only what's needed.
- Avoid printing basic agendas (use whiteboard or projector instead).
- For handouts in meetings and presentations, consider providing one copy for several readers rather than individual copies, particularly for group exercises.
- Consider holding the meeting entirely on-line using "Live Meeting" (available as part of the county's Linc On-line/Office 365 package).

**Paperless Collating:** Splicing files via PDF into packets (instead of printing segments individually and hand collating) saves considerable staff time. Note: This is a related efficiency that does not necessarily save paper.

**Paperless Bids:** Work toward development and implementation of a paperless bidding system. Until then, minimize printing of bid documents whenever possible.

**On-line Reports:** Put paper reports online (Growth report, Benchmarks report)

**Personal Workstation Practices: The little things you do at your work station collectively make a big difference.**

- When reviewing/editing documents, do it electronically.
  - For those who find it challenging, adjust the font; abnormalities may “show up” better.
  - Example: Public Health purchased large screen monitors for staff who routinely print out large and complex spreadsheets only for review and successfully reduced the need for printed copies.
- Insert print reduction message in e-mail signature block: “Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail” or “Think before you print.”
- Use the revision features in word processing software to edit documents on screen instead of printing drafts and making hand-written comments.
- Send cc's via email (PDF)
- Print *drafts* in a smaller font with narrower margins. Simply changing the default margins from 1.25" to 1" can reduce the amount of paper you use by up to 8%. (this can be done when using electronic letterhead for internal documents).
- Preview documents before printing. Use the print preview to spot formatting errors and blank pages before you print.
- If you must print a document, print only the pages you need.
- Use a single space format for the text of final documents.
- Use space-efficient fonts like Times New Roman (County standard).
- Use your workstation as the host for Live Meeting meetings.

**In-House Opt-out:** Develop systems (where not yet available) for employees to “Opt out” of receiving unwanted County produced paper distributions:

- Paper pay-stubs (via PeopleSoft)
- Budget and Payroll certification reports
- Interoffice mailings (newsletters, etc.)

**Policy Issues:**

- Inform employees of paper and printing costs in your office. Even if projects aren't specifically charged for print costs (prints/toner/staff time), simply being aware of the overall cost that the organization incurs for paper and printing may encourage reduced use of paper.

- Establish guidelines for a “*reduced* standard format” for materials prepared and presented at official county meetings. Such standards could significantly cut waste while still meeting the business needs of the council, departments, and public. Example: instead of full-page PPTs, the reduced standard format could be two slides per page, double-sided (B+W).
- Develop “print standards” to eliminate wasted print outs of poorly formatted work products (excel seems to be the biggest offender, sometimes splitting onto 4 pages).
  - Employ ½ inch margins on documents intended for an internal audience to reduce total number of pages.
- The Ordinance overrides the King County style guide and all departmental and divisional style guides, which state that certain documents, such as external correspondence, should be on single sided paper.
- Prohibit procurement of other than 100% recycled paper.
- There are only very limited exceptions to the ordinance. These exceptions generally apply only to custom printing of certain documents by the Print Shop. For routing use of copy paper use of 100% recycled paper is the rule.
- Additional information is available at the Seattle’s PaperCuts program <http://www.seattle.gov/papercuts/>