

Chamber launches new carbon footprinting service

Chamber Utilities™ has launched a new carbon footprinting service to help members calculate their carbon emissions and minimise their environmental impact.

Environmental performance is becoming increasingly important to business success and your carbon footprint is the measure of the amount of carbon (mainly carbon dioxide, or CO₂, from combustion of fossil fuels, but also some other greenhouse gases) your organisation emits.

There are many versions of calculators available for carbon footprinting. This can be an extremely complex task because your carbon footprint will be made up of both direct emissions (e.g. carbon emissions due to your business operations, such as: energy consumption at your premises, fuel use due to business mileage, etc) and indirect emissions from use of products and services through your supply chain.

A key component of your 'direct' carbon footprint is use of energy in buildings. One way of reducing this is to carry out an energy survey, where an energy consultant will visit your site and identify inefficiency, producing a follow-up report to prioritise recommendations for savings. On average, businesses can save nearly a fifth of their energy bill through introducing simple energy efficiency measures, many of which are low or no cost. This will have a big impact on reducing carbon emissions and for many businesses can equate in monetary terms, to a five per cent increase in sales.

Energy Consultants from service provider Utility Auditing Ltd have undertaken the Carbon Trust's Carbon Footprint training to qualify them as assessors, so in addition to helping you save energy, they can also calculate your reduced carbon footprint.

Becoming more energy efficient will profit both your business and the environment, but new government regulations are also ensuring organisations fulfill their environmental responsibilities. One aspect of European legislation is the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive, which will introduce the need for energy performance certificates for display in public buildings and when commercial buildings are constructed, sold or rented.

When you consider statistics showing that the average UK business is wasting up to 20% of the energy it buys, it is apparent that every business can do its bit to combat climate change. Even a small office can emit three to five tonnes of carbon dioxide a year through lighting, heating and office equipment. Companies taking responsibility for energy conservation will not just reduce costs and harmful greenhouse gas emissions, they will also reap the benefits of enhanced reputation. Legislation and public pressure are making it increasingly difficult for organisations without 'green credentials' to be competitive.

While businesses can't reverse environmental damage already incurred, they can play their part in preventing further damage. By managing energy more effectively, environmental impact will be reduced. Chamber Utilities™ provide businesses with professional support to stem energy wastage and purchase gas and electricity at the most competitive prices.

The Chamber Utilities™ service is delivered by Utility Auditing Ltd (UAL), part of the Ener-g group. UAL is an authorised Carbon Trust consultancy and can assist eligible companies in carrying out carbon footprint assessments and obtain free or subsidised Carbon Trust energy efficiency surveys and support.

UAL can also help you to implement survey report recommendations and follow up actions. Companies can gain access to 0% interest Carbon Trust loans and advice on Enhanced Capital Allowances, which will often offset the cost of implementing energy efficiency measures, such as energy saving products or replacement equipment.

For further details contact Margaret Toms 023 8020 6154 or visit our website www.soton-chamber.co.uk