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Timely Tips for a Green Home Office

1 - Put plants in your work space. They are aesthetically pleasing, are said to increase productivity and concentration, absorb toxins from indoor air and improve humidity by returning 90% of the water we give them, making you feel more comfortable.

2 - Reduce heating and cooling. Close off vents to unused rooms while you are working in your home office. In the summer, to keep cool, use a fan in your office and draw those curtains. In the winter, turn down the thermostat, pull the blinds to conserve heat and wear a sweater.

3 - Conserve power. Switch off all your equipment including computers, printers and lights when you are finished working. Turn off cell phone chargers when the phone is fully charged. Better yet, plug everything into a power bar to save energy and flip that off, too, when not in use.

4 - Think light. Turn the lights off in the rest of the house when you are working in your office. Install energy-efficient light bulbs. Make as much use as possible of natural light for reading.

5 - Be paper-savvy. Turn scrap paper into notepads. Use the other side of old documents for writing and printing, or print double-sided. Send emails of PDFs instead of faxing. Reuse old envelopes by putting a label over the old address. Scan your paper files for electronic storage... just be sure to make a back-up! Buy recycled office paper. Keep a recycling bin handy for the paper you do use.

6 - Buy second-hand. Everything in your home office doesn't have to be brand new. Use furniture and shelves you already have. Think before you buy new technology. What you have may be good enough.

7 - Pass it on. Don't throw away your electronics and furniture when you buy new ones. Recycle, donate or sell them when you buy something new.