



it's not easy being » green!



Yep, Kermit the Frog is right. It isn't easy being green. While the "green" movement appears to be gathering momentum thanks to the outdoor industry's commitment to sustainable products, it takes work to be green.

In the winter 2005 issue of GearTrends® Outdoor magazine, Pride Wright wrote about the Green Steps Association in the article, "A Step in the Right Direction." (Go to www.geartrends.com/magazines to read it online.)

Green Steps is a non-profit organization established to promote principles of sustainability within the outdoor industry.

"While most of the sustainability buzz in the industry has focused on the manufacturing side, the role of the retailer in this progression toward sustainability will be pivotal," wrote Wright in the article.

For the retailer, being green means more than just carrying organic cotton clothing and PET fleece or using green bathroom cleaners. It means finding ways to buy sustainable or recycled retail products needed for display, lighting, presentation and store upgrades.

There aren't very many companies in the store equipment and display industry yet that carry these kinds of goods, but there is a green movement gathering momentum as companies reassess environmental commitments.

Let's take a look at what's being done in the retail sector to introduce sustainable and environmentally friendly lighting, fixturing and flooring. You might be surprised to find what's in the works.

LIGHTING

Lighting is a good place to start a green conversion, since it doesn't require a huge investment of time or money to make a difference. With the right lighting products, a retailer can save money and be environmentally friendly by using less energy. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), retailers spend about \$20 billion a year on energy.

By replacing tubular fluorescent T12 lights with more energy efficient T8s, business owners can save as much as 40 percent in reduced wattage. The T8s

For retailers, being green means **MORE THAN RECYCLING** and selling organic cotton. It also includes seeking out lighting, carpeting, fixtures and more that are environmentally friendly. BY SHARON LEICHAM

have the same 20,000-hour lamp life as the standard T12 but exhibit a slower decline in light output over time. At 40 percent of their life, standard T12 lamps only produce about 80 percent of their initial light output, compared to about 90 percent for T8 lamps.

T8 lamps used with electronic ballasts (ballasts are not interchangeable between T8s and T12s) will typically use about 32 percent less energy than the T12s. T8s also use little or no mercury inside the lamp, saving on disposal and environmental costs. Longer lamp life and less light depreciation also mean lower maintenance costs.

It's also wise to consider placing motion sensors in the back room, office and bathrooms to detect lack of motion so the lights are automatically turned off when no one is there.

FIXTURES

If some of your fixtures are on their last legs (or casters, as the case may be), consider buying new ones from companies manufacturing fixtures from sustainable products.

At the 2005 Outdoor Retailer Summer Market trade show in Salt Lake City, EcoWood showed its new rounder fixture utilizing Sawyer Paddle & Oars post-industrial wood waste. The rounder's circular hang bar is fabricated from Sawyer wood waste. It's the perfect fixture for hanging paddling jackets and brings the cycle full circle—from paddles and oars to paddling jackets. All of EcoWood's retail displays use post-consumer or post-industrial wood waste and include gondolas, 2-ways, 4-ways, 8-ways, tables and shelving.

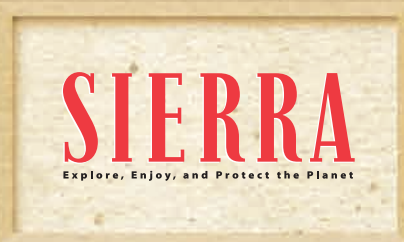
Jefferson State Forest Products uses both hardwoods and softwoods in its line of retail tables, bins,





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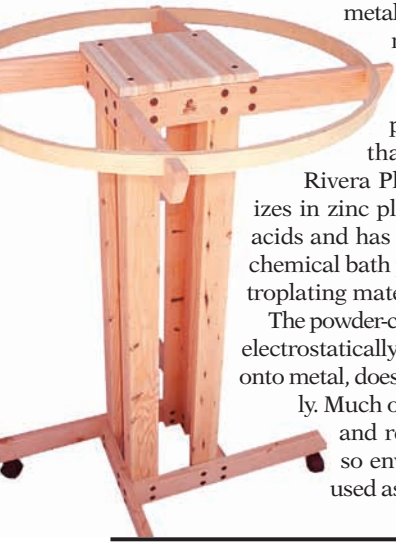
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crates, sign holders and racks. The hardwoods are certified as sustainably harvested or are purchased from small independent sawmills that produce lower volumes of lumber from private lands in Southern Oregon. Most of the hardwoods have been harvested as part of softwood extraction to prepare the land for replanting. These hardwood logs usually end up being chipped for paper pulp.

Excess wood scraps resulting from Jefferson State Forest Products are, at the end of the day, put in front of the manufacturing plant for people in the community to cart away for firewood and other uses.

Nowadays, fixture manufacturers are using less volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and harmful chemical agents in metal 4-ways or T-stands.



Reeve Store Equipment Company, one of the largest and most respected companies in the display business, has initiated a recycling program for its electroplating process that disposes of toxic byproducts. Pico

Rivera Plating, a company subsidiary, specializes in zinc plating, which uses the least amount of acids and has the least amount of carcinogens in its chemical bath process. Zinc is currently the only electroplating material that can be recycled in this way.

The powder-coating process, which uses finely ground electrostatically charged particles of pigment sprayed onto metal, doesn't produce VOCs, making it eco-friendly. Much of the overspray powder can be recycled and reused and, because powder coating is so environmentally friendly, it is now being used as a finish on wood and plastic products.



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FLOORING

If we were to tour landfills in any city in the United States, chances are we'd see carpet in different stages of decay sticking out of the heap. The EPA says that carpet amounts to more than 1 percent of all municipal solid waste by weight.

Milliken Carpet has developed its Earthwise Ennovations Earth-Square process to help customers re-use carpet instead of dumping it into landfills. The recycled carpet is super-cleaned, re-textured and re-styled, then re-sold at about 50 percent to 60 percent of the cost of new carpet. It looks new and comes with a 10-year guarantee.


Dodge-Regupol Inc. is known for its commercial rubber flooring called ECOsurfaces. The flooring is manufactured using 100-percent post-consumer synthetic tire rubber and 30-percent post-industrial rubber. The rubber tires are supplied by industrial facilities that obtain tires from landfills.

Lyptus makes wood flooring from a eucalyptus hybrid grown on plantations by Weyerhaeuser using sustainable growing methods. A third of the area is kept in native vegetation to help maintain elements of the natural ecosystem. After the first harvest, eucalyptus trees are grown from the stump or root structure of the prior generation trees, minimizing disturbance of the land.

Retailers will have these and many more options and opportunities in the future to create a cleaner, greener retail environment that is not only good for customers, but good for employees as well.

Like Kermit said, being green isn't always easy, but it's really not that difficult to start the process. Begin by designing a company environmental plan that outlines how your store plans to cut down waste and hazardous materials generated by the production and sales of products your store carries. To get started:

1. Gather information on the manufacturing processes of your vendors
2. Gather information relative to more efficient lighting and green fixturing
3. Choose the changes you want to make
4. Make the changes
5. Review the results
6. Regularly inform employees and your customers of your progress
7. Display environmentally friendly products where customers can see them
8. Avoid over-packaged goods

The benefits of being green are many, including letting your customers feel good about shopping in your store, reducing your impact on the environment, improving your store's environmental image and saving money. 

» To read more merchandising insights and know-how, go to SNEWSnet.com/merchandising.

green resources 

EcoWood Retail Displays
www.plexuspacific.com

Reeve Store Equipment
www.reeveco.com

Energy Star Lighting Products Info
www.energystar.gov

Milliken Carpet
www.milliken地毯.com

Jefferson State Forest Products
www.jeffersonstateproducts.com

Dodge-Regupol Inc.
www.regupol.com

Weyerhaeuser Lyptus flooring
www.weyerhaeuser.com

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