



Environmental assistance to small and medium-size enterprises

The environmental impact from a single small or medium-size enterprise (SME) may be limited, but summing up, the total impact from such enterprises is huge. In most cases, SMEs have neither the resources to employ an environmental officer, nor even the available time to learn about environmental issues and implement changes.

The Environmental Information Exchange initiative

Oxford Brookes University in partnership with various organisations and businesses have launched the Environmental Information Exchange web site, which is a forum for the exchange of environmental information, primarily amongst businesses in Oxfordshire, UK. The purpose is to provide SMEs within the Oxfordshire region with a central source of information and support for resolving environmental concerns.

This information exchange initiative may be replicated in other regions throughout Europe. The project manager Michael Esvelt explains the Environmental Information Exchange (EiE) initiative: "EiE provides businesses with practical information to lower their environmental impacts while saving money. EiE helps SMEs implement energy, water and waste efficiencies, particularly where national programmes fail to penetrate."

Mr. Esvelt lists a number of specific initiatives, including:

- Working with retailers in Oxford to help reduce waste amounts by increasing the recycling of materials.
- Working with business parks to assess their waste production and energy use to help set up appropriate solutions.
- Training businesses in resource efficiency and implementing resource saving initiatives.
- Provision of bespoke information on specific environmental concerns in businesses.

For more information about the Environmental Information Exchange initiative, visit:

www.brookes.ac.uk/eie

This newsflash is issued by the EECN which is DG Environment's support structure for European Environmental Communication Networks.

Visit the web site of the EECN on:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/networks/index_en.htm to learn more about the activities of the networks and read newsflashes previously released.

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