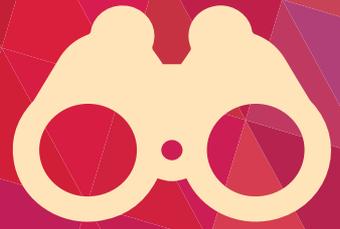


Carbon Trust Triple Standard



At npower Business Solutions, our aim is to practice what we preach when it comes to energy management excellence. As well as supporting our customers to follow best practice, we also demonstrate it within our own buildings portfolio. So we are delighted to have become the first UK energy supplier to be awarded the Carbon Trust's prestigious Triple Standard.

This environmental award recognises best practice in the field of energy, water and waste management. The Carbon Trust supports businesses in managing these resources more effectively and committing to continuous improvements. Qualifying for the Triple Standard involves a rigorous assessment process including site visits, data reviews and analysis by independent moderators.

"We place a high priority on minimising our impact on the environment and have taken significant steps across all areas of our operations," explains Jonathan Hulbert, Real Estate Sustainability Manager for npower. "For example, over the assessment period between 2012 and 2014, we cut our energy consumption from the Grid by 20.4%, saving the equivalent of around 6,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide."

AMR technology helps identify savings

This drastic reduction has been possible thanks to analysing consumption site-by-site across the npower portfolio, using automated meter reading (AMR) technology linked to Encompass monitoring software. "It's made it easy to pinpoint waste and also to track the benefits of introducing various different efficiency measures," explains Jonathan.

"Across our sites, we have now installed solar PV and solar water heaters, more efficient lighting and some even make use of wind turbines. We've implemented Agile working environments at many office locations, where fixed desks are replaced with well-designed shared office space with mobile IT solutions."

Within our own npower Business Solutions offices in Solihull, an Innovation Centre has also been developed to showcase and trial the latest demand-reduction technologies, such as intelligent LEDs and state-of-the-art solar panels. (See Innovation case study for more details.)

Staff engagement boosts recycling rates

"In the waste area, we've made significant savings too," says Jonathan. "For example, reviewing our waste contracts and introducing a staff education programme has helped us almost double the amount we recycle over recent years."

We also aim to follow the SKA Gold Standard for office refurbishments, adhering to strict guidelines to maximise recycling and minimise waste. "In the recent refurbishment of an office in London, for example, we achieved a recycling rate of 96%," explains Jonathan.



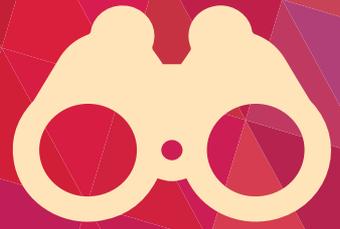
Automating water monitoring

Water is another key area of resource management. A wide-ranging reduction programme has reduced water consumption by 23.5%. Initiatives include a staff education and awareness campaign (see box-out below), dual flush facilities added to toilets and the installation of more water-efficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems, when upgrades are required.

However, the largest reduction in water over the past few years has been due to the introduction of BioDomes in urinals in male washrooms, which reduce the need for automated flushes. Across all the npower office sites, this has contributed to saving enough water to fill more than three Olympic-sized swimming pools.

Jonathan's team is currently automating water monitoring within the our Encompass resource management package. Having access to more detailed consumption data will facilitate more effecting monitoring and the setting of reduction targets.

Carbon Trust Triple Standard



Walking the talk

“As an energy supplier, it’s no surprise that npower understands the environmental and financial value that can be achieved through improving the efficiency of its own operations,” says the Carbon Trust’s Managing Director of Certification, Darran Messem. “They have become the first power utility to be awarded triple certification to the Carbon Trust Standard for their offices, setting a great example of best practice in energy, water and waste management for their customers and other UK companies.”

Elsewhere in our business, the expertise accumulated from putting best practice into place in our own portfolio is being shared with customers. “We use the same technologies and approaches to support our business customers to increase resource efficiency and reduce costs,” explains Jonathan. “These include initiatives like energy efficiency audits, demand-side response and taking advantage of renewable sources.”

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Getting staff on board

Employee engagement is a key element of effective resource management, and one that’s often overlooked. “That’s why we conceived our ‘Environment Action Sustainability You’ (EASY) campaign,” explains Jonathan Hulbert, Real Estate Sustainability Manager at npower.

This staff communications programme has successfully raised awareness of energy and resource efficiency around the business, and has formed part of our Carbon Trust Triple Standard accreditation process. “The aim of EASY has been to reduce our negative impacts on the environment – from energy use, carbon emissions from business travel, water consumption and waste to landfill – through employee engagement and empowerment,” continues Jonathan.

Over recent years, the EASY campaign has contributed to a 15.9% decrease in carbon emissions, a 15.7% reduction in gas usage and an 18% increase in recycling.

The campaign certainly impressed the judges at the 2015 Energy Awards, who awarded us the top prize in the Behavioural Change and Employee Engagement category.

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Case study