

How to conduct your office energy review

By Robert May, MD of ramsac

IT IS OFFICIAL, 2007 will be the year of Green IT. The government WEEE directive (The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive) which becomes law in January aims to minimise the impact of electrical and electronic goods on the environment by increasing re-use and recycling and reducing the amount of WEEE going to landfill.

The WEEE directive will affect all businesses when they dispose of EEE assets, but there are many other practical steps that companies can take to reduce the burden on the environment and their bank balances.

Here is an energy review checklist:

Ensure employees are energy aware and that all non-essential PCs and equipment are shut down overnight, or during premises closure. Only switch on equipment being used regularly.

Are employees unnecessarily printing out emails or documents? Recent figures suggest that a typical office document is printed 19 times. Could you improve your electronic archiving?

Ensure that any printing is on recycled paper and have a recycling scheme to dispose of paper waste.

When considering replacing or investing in new technology from mobile phone to new server, first ask "Is it necessary?" If it is, look for energy efficient products, such as the range by Dell

(www.dell.co.uk). These are not necessarily more expensive and you will recoup the costs in reduced energy usage. Ensure that the disposal of EEE is compliant with the WEEE directive. Full details at: the environment agency website.

Review software and internet capabilities. The popularity of broadband, online applications, VoIP and MSN has skyrocketed making it easier for employees to work from home, reducing fuel consumption and CO2 emissions on the daily commute.

Consider whether long distance or overseas business meetings are necessary – can they be conducted via webinar or conference call?

Finally, take a look at recent energy bills, can the supplier be switched to a lower cost or more environmentally friendly source?

