

Environmentally Responsible Relocation Management

By Catherine St. Onge, Strategic Project Partner, Corporate Project Partners

As green building practices move into the mainstream, much of the attention has been given to design and construction aspects of environmentally-sensitive building solutions. However, a growing consideration in relocations and their associated real estate dispositions is ensuring that waste material is minimized and properly handled to reduce the impact upon the environment. A typical corporate relocation or building disposition generates significant amounts of waste in the form of packing materials, outdated technology equipment and old office furniture and general supplies.

The first step in planning and implementing a “greener” corporate relocation is developing an understanding of the components of the project which create an impact on the environment. Careful planning combined with knowledge of available services will effectively reduce environmental influences with surprisingly minimal time impact.

The next step is identification of the environmental impacts and associated green programs and services available to reduce these impacts. The marketplace has become increasingly aware of businesses’ interest in environmentally responsible products and services, and many vendors are supplementing their offerings with a plethora of environmen-



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Furniture:

When disposing of furniture, your company may seek to recycle components through the manufacturer or hire a broker to sell desirable items on the used office furniture market. Furniture in good condition may also be donated to numerous charities.

Packing Materials:

Moving companies have become more environmentally savvy, using 100% recycled corrugated cardboard for packing boxes, as well as recycled packing materials. If cardboard boxes aren’t your company’s style, Rent-a-Crate provides reusable plastic crates touted as being environmentally friendly by reducing the amount of cardboard used during relocations. As an added service, movers and packing material vendors often also provide “mobile” recycling programs for purging prior to relocation or disposition.

Hazardous Materials:

Vendors specializing in the disposition of hazardous materials will collect obsolete or surplus

tally sustainable materials, features, environmental teams and other support programs, including:

computer equipment for safe disposal. Some office supplies, such as toner cartridges, contain toxins that require specialized handling as well. Hiring a recycling company experienced in identifying and properly disposing of these types of materials should be integral to the relocation project plan. Up to 95% of the components in a standard PC setup can be recycled by knowledgeable and qualified vendors.

Positive results will lend credibility and confidence to the program and a resulting increase in participation. Minimizing the environmental impact of a relocation or disposition reinforces a corporate commitment to environmentally sound operating practices and builds goodwill throughout the company and the community. Though it may be challenging to add “green” items to the already long list of project and move related tasks, companies, their employees and the earth will benefit from a well-considered, holistic approach to managing the environmental impact of a relocation project.

About the Author:

Catherine St. Onge is a Strategic Project Planner with Corporate Project Partners, a trusted provider of real estate project management and relocation planning services to corporate clients throughout New England.