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BRITISH WORKERS DON'T BRING ENVIRONMENTAL GOOD HABITS TO WORK

Brits are leaving their environmentally friendly habits at home with a fifth of UK workers saying they take no steps to be 'green' at work.

A new study by Enviro-Fresh, a Rentokil Initial subsidiary, shows that eight out of ten workers recycle at home but this drops to just six out of ten at work. Only 8% of respondents have ever considered using the short flush facility on toilets at work, to help save water.

The research shows that:

- Seven out of ten (71%) employees never switch lights off
- Seven out of ten (71%) do not recycle
- 85% do not shut windows if their air conditioning or heating is on
- 93% have never used the short flush at work

The research revealed that one of the biggest areas of workplace environmental apathy is in water wastage. In the UK, over 310¹ million litres of water is wasted by offices every day with individual workers wasting an average 35 litres each day, 86% of which is a direct result of flushing toilets. However, workers told researchers they are twice as likely to use the short flush facility on toilets at home than at work.

The study does show that opportunities exist for management to take advantage of worker 'green' goodwill – nine out of ten employees say they want to do more to reduce the impact of their behaviour at work and a third would like to receive more information from their employers on how this can be done.

¹ Envirowise

Top five environmentally friendly things that workers would like their workplaces to adopt are:

- More recycling bins (69%)
- Light sensors to switch off lights in unoccupied rooms (59%)
- Toilets with variable flushes (56%)
- Devices to automatically switch off electrical equipment (52%)
- Solar panels (40%)

Mark Gillespie, Managing Director, Enviro-Fresh, comments: “This research shows that employees would like to see more guidance on how they can do their bit for the environment at work, and it’s not just big things that have an impact – even small steps like installing adjustable flow toilets in washrooms can significantly reduce water wastage. British businesses have caught onto the environmental and economic benefits of things like recycling, but many are continuing to pour their hard earned profits down the drain. The average business is still wasting three times more water than it actually needs.”

“Compounding the lack of action is the lack of awareness about workplace issues affecting the environment, and specifically water wastage,” continued Gillespie.

When asked how much water the average UK office wastes each year, three quarters drastically underestimated the amount and over half were amazed when told the correct figure was 310 million litres.

Dr Martin Gibson, Programme Director, Envirowise said “Although we have just experienced the wettest summer since 1912, both droughts and flooding could be side effects of climate change, and both highlight the importance and value of water. Once businesses begin to see that every drop of water has a price, both environmentally and financially, they cannot fail to understand how something as simple as fixing a dripping tap can have a positive impact on their profits and their reputation. Claiming sustainable behaviour is no longer enough, businesses now need to be able to demonstrate that they are running an environmentally responsible operation, and getting employees on board with that is a key part of the process.”

- ENDS -

Notes to editors:**About Enviro-Fresh**

Enviro-Fresh provide environmentally friendly urinal solutions that help to conserve water without compromising washroom hygiene. Enviro-Fresh offer bespoke solutions using their own Defra approved urinal flush control and patented urinal sleeve (the “Sani-Sleeve”) with bio-enzyme technology, to substantially reduce water wastage in the corporate environment. eco-clear, launched by Enviro-Fresh earlier in 2007, is a new, fully managed urinal hygiene solution which uses these market leading patented products combined with a regular urinal service and maintenance regime to ensure that urinals are kept clean, fresh and free-flowing, whilst using significantly less water.

Research

Enviro-Fresh commissioned Tickbox.net to interview 1,017 full time UK workers between 12 September and 20 September 2007. Regional statistics are available on request.

For more information

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