

SUSTAINABLE MEDICAL FACILITIES GUIDE



Medical facilities account for more than 8 percent of the total energy consumption in buildings across the U.S. and are estimated to generate more than 5 million tons of solid waste each year. This guide helps medical offices and hospitals evaluate their practices and take practical actions to increase their sustainability.

««« ABOUT THIS GUIDE

ENERGY



- Track monthly energy use.
- Turn off equipment when not in use, including medical equipment, computers and lights.
- Upgrade to LED lighting.
- When replacing equipment, look for ENERGY STAR® ratings.



Visit www.njcleanenergy.com to find financial incentives.

WASTE



- Install recycling bins in your office and waiting room.
- Go paperless. Use electronic medical record systems and digital X-rays.
- Use cloth lab coats and exam gowns.
- Invest in rechargeable batteries for medical devices.



Visit recycle.nj.gov to learn about recycling requirements.

WATER



- Upgrade to WaterSense® products.
- Install amalgam and fluorine separators on dental office water disposal systems.
- Utilize drought resistant landscaping or smart-controllers for irrigation systems.



Visit www.epa.gov/watersense to learn more.

CHEMICALS



- Avoid purchasing equipment and furniture that contain halogenated and brominated flame retardants.
- Avoid plastics or other products that contain PVC and BPA.
- Eliminate the use of mercury containing equipment.
- Switch to non-medicated hand soap.



To learn more, visit practicegreenhealth.org/topics/safer-chemicals.

X-RAY FILM PROCESSORS



- Switch to digital imaging to eliminate the need for chemicals, films and water.
- Retrofit existing x-ray processors with automatic shut off valves and a rinse effluent recycling system.
- Install flow regulators to limit the rinse water flow rate.



For more resources visit www.nj.gov/dep/rpp/brh/index.html.

STERILIZERS



- Upgrade to sterilizers with water recirculation and automatic shut off features.
- Install jacket and chamber condensate retrofit kits on older sterilizers to reduce water use.
- Switch to steam sterilization to reduce chemical use.
- Run sterilizers with full loads only.



Visit www.des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/factsheets/dwgb/documents/dwgb-26-14.pdf to learn more.

PURCHASING



- Adopt a green purchasing policy.
- Buy recycled-content and low-toxicity products.
- Choose products with a minimum amount of packaging and buy in bulk.
- Select products that are certified to meet reputable third party standards.

For more resources, visit www.epa.gov/greenerproducts.

CLEANING



- Convert to green cleaning products certified by Safer Choice, GreenSeal, UL EcoLogo or GreenGuard.
- Select cleaning equipment that is energy efficient and uses less water and chemicals.
- Look for products that can be used in cold water to conserve energy.

To learn more, visit www.epa.gov/saferchoice.

LEADERSHIP



- Create a green team and adopt a Sustainability Policy.
- Educate your employees and patients about Project Medicine Drop, the safe way to dispose of medicine.
- Inform patients about the proper way to dispose of sharps and syringes.

Join the [New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry](http://registry.njsbdc.com) at registry.njsbdc.com.

CASE STUDY



Atlantic Health System

Atlantic Health System (AHS) is dedicated to building healthier communities through its Trusted Network of Caring[®]. AHS is designated as a New Jersey Sustainable Business due to its sustainability programs focused on:

- **Energy Efficiency**
- **Recycling**
- **Safer Chemicals**

At Atlantic Medical Group (AMG), many small medical practices have chosen to transition to non-medicated hand soap without triclosan. As remaining AMG facilities deplete their existing hand soap inventory, they will transition to purchasing non-medicated hand soap too, proving even small steps can make a big impact. [Learn More](#)

RESOURCES

Practice Greenhealth
practicegreenhealth.org

Practice Greenhealth Eco Checklist
practicegreenhealth.org/pubs/EcoChecklist_R5.pdf

Sustainability Roadmap for Hospitals
www.sustainabilityroadmap.org

Healthier Hospital Initiative
healthierhospitals.org

NJ Sustainable Business Registry
registry.njsbdc.com

NJ Sustainable Business Guides
www.nj.gov/dep/aqes/sustain_bus.html

