



The Green Group

Local Companies, City Lead the Way on Environment

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Staff Reporter

Valley business owners and executives say there's a financial case to be made for going "green." Yes, the term has been overused and abused by some. But as public awareness increases about global warming and depletion of the world's natural resources, so is the demand for things like recycling, energy efficiency, and clean renewable sources of power.

The following companies in the greater San Fernando Valley area are among many committed to meeting that demand.

Impress Communications Inc.

Location: Chatsworth

Founded: 1989

Number of Employees: 75

Paul Marino just can't get the term "reduce, re-use, recycle" out of his head. So he made the green rallying cry a cornerstone of his commercial printing and visual communications business.

"I view environmental sustainability as the way of the future," said Marino, president of Chatsworth-based Impress Communications Inc. "And it's part of Impress being on the cutting-edge."

Impress obtained Forest Stewardship Council certifications, meaning it uses paper products that come from sustainable sources. American Printer magazine also recently gave the company an Environmental Excellence Award.

The company recycles 150,000 pounds of paper per month and launched a program to pick-up customer's recyclable paper.

It uses soy and vegetable based inks that emit a low amount of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and ones that emit no VOCs. Year over year from 2008 to 2009, the company reduced its VOC emissions 49 percent, said Marino.

Marino also invested in state-of-the-art printing equipment to boost production efficiency. One environmental perk of the new equipment is that it uses 100 percent of ink in cartridges so the company doesn't have to send toxic waste to the landfill.

"We try to do a lot of things that send the right message to customers and potential customers," said Marino.

In 2006, Impress moved its operations into a new building. The new office space takes advantage of natural light - a far cry from Impress' old digs. The floors are sealed concrete floors instead of carpet. And glass in the building is tinted to keep it cool.

In February 2009, Impress installed 58 new green approved lighting fixtures that have boosted the quality of light in the building and reduced energy costs substantially. The company also uses non-toxic building cleaners and staggers shifts to avoid using power during peak hours.

Worth the investment?

"Through the down economy we have sustained well," said Marino.