



think global **think green** desking · seating · reception · filing



ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

The executive summary... **for all of us.**

- ✓ We have reduced our consumption of electricity by 25% over the last four years.
- ✓ We have entirely eliminated the use of CFCs and HCFCs in all our manufacturing processes to protect the ozone layer.
- ✓ From the lunchroom to the factory floor, we recycle 89% of our waste production across the organization.
- ✓ Global's patented, industry-first, wood/polymer molding technology diverts 7.3 tons of waste per day from the landfill.
- ✓ A constantly expanding textile offering woven from recycled polyester is an environmental option with little or no up-charge to the customer.
- ✓ Our cardboard packing utilizes 80% recycled material and wherever possible we flat pack to reduce shipping volume and minimize our carbon footprint.
- ✓ Our chrome plating facility discharges water that is clean enough to return to the municipal water infrastructure.
- ✓ Our non-hazardous powder-coat paint process reclaims up to 99% of overspray with minimal discharge to the environment.
- ✓ We recycle more than 100 tons of aluminum every year. 75% of the aluminum ever produced is still in circulation.

Before governments developed environmental protection legislation we were setting our own standards for sustainable practices, developing new technologies and using reclaimed materials to safeguard the environment. From design through to manufacturing we pay particular attention to reducing the impact of our product packaging, the use of recycled and recyclable materials and production processes that minimize energy consumption. A better product is also a green product. All Global products are BIFMA™ approved to ensure years of service. Unlike many imports our North American parts and service department keeps our products working longer and out of the landfill. Because most of what goes into a Global product is made by Global we have a greater opportunity to achieve our environmental goals. We require our suppliers and those that work with us to share our environmental commitment and standards. It's not only the right thing to do; it's also good business.





environmental committee

At Global we believe we have a responsibility to safeguard the environment in the course of manufacturing and doing business. That's one of the reasons we created the Global Group Environmental Committee; to keep us focused on manufacturing high-quality products at a great price and in a sustainable manner.

The Environmental Committee has members recruited from across the organization, from the factory floor to senior management and reports directly to the Chairman and CEO. In simple terms, it's a fully integrated component of our operations, financial planning and expenditures.

A piecemeal approach to sustainability can't work. The Global Group Environmental Committee promotes communication and cooperation among Global divisions and whether it's a way to save energy in one facility, or conserve materials on an assembly line, the Committee encourages the sharing of ideas, practices and technologies that protect both the environment and the health of our people.





Greenguard Certified We can all breathe easier knowing that Global products are Greenguard compliant. The Greenguard program is run by a worldwide independent organization that rigorously tests materials according to government guidelines and measures harmful emissions such as formaldehyde, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and carbon monoxide. For a full listing of our Greenguard-certified products, visit www.greenguard.org



We're ISO 14001 certified.



compliance + commitment

ISO Certification ISO 14001 is the benchmark international standard for the implementation and operation of an environmental management system. Certification requires a commitment to continuously improve practices that protect the environment. To meet that responsibility specific environmental objectives and targets need to be set, as well as a program to reach those goals and a system that evaluates both the process management and results. At Global we're proud to say we're ISO 14001 registered.

Saving energy means sweating the details. By finding small efficiencies throughout our production facilities Global has systematically reduced its electricity consumption by 25% in the last four years.

saving energy conserving resources



Of course we're taking the customary steps to save energy; replacing metal halide lights with energy efficient fluorescent reflective fixtures. That alone saves tens of thousands of dollars of energy a year. But we're also reducing energy consumption with some innovative thinking of our own.

A new specially formulated epoxy paint bakes on at lower temperatures and saves natural gas without any compromise in quality. And adding capacitors to electric motors has boosted the efficiency of manufacturing equipment resulting in energy savings of up to 23%.





Safeguarding air and water quality.

Our powder-coat paint process reclaims up to 99% of the overspray with minimal discharge to the environment.



Finishing our products in ways that protect our air and water.

At Global we use powder-coat paint finishes for the majority of products; a process that recovers and reuses 99% of the overspray with minimal discharge to the environment. Powder coating is a clean electrostatic process that offers a superior finish and uses no solvents or CFCs.

Some components and finishes, however, necessitate the use of our “GEL” paint lines. Here 85% of the overspray is captured and transferred using compressed air technology to a 300-gallon tote. Our paint supplier checks it for quality and color match and recycles it back to us for painting drawer bodies, hanging rods and other less-visible surfaces.

One fundamental responsibility in minimizing the environmental impact of our manufacturing processes includes carefully managing our wastewater. At our chrome plating facility metal-salt baths are constantly monitored to prolong the life of the plating solution. In fact, the water released from our chrome plating plant is clean enough to return to the municipal water infrastructure.

We're reducing the amount of packaging we use. Global is "flat packing" more and more of its chairs, reducing carton size by 50 to 75% with equal reductions in transportation energy and related CO₂ emissions. And we're ahead of the curve in using reclaimed materials in packaging. Most government and regulatory bodies require 50% recycled material to be classified as recycled. At Global all our cardboard shipping cartons contain at least 80% recycled materials. We print our cartons with water-based inks which break down more easily for recycling and do not contain harmful solvents or heavy metal based pigments. And we go one step further. On customer request we ship products in reusable blankets which eliminate cartons altogether.

packaging doing more with less



Global "flat packs" to reduce shipping volume by as much as 75% to save transport energy and reduce pollution.



We use water-based ink that contains no harmful solvents or heavy metal pigments to print our cartons.

And wherever possible Global ships with reusable blankets to eliminate cartons altogether.





We divert
7.3 tons of
plastic and wood
waste per day from
landfill sites.



innovative thinking new materials

Our closed loop manufacturing drastically reduces waste. We're not new to the game. We were in recycling long before it came into style. In 1993 we developed a patented technology that takes recycled plastic and combines it with post-production wood waste from our wood manufacturing facilities. This new composite material is injection molded and utilized in everything from panel frames to chair components. It's not pretty to look at, but it's very strong and it's inside where it counts.

Using this innovative reclamation technology we've been able to divert 7.3 tons of plastic and wood waste per day from the landfill, which translates into 2000 tons a year! In fact this technology has been so successful that Global is now recycling waste for other companies.





We're pushing the envelope with soy-based foam.

the air we breathe



At Global we produce millions of chairs every year, which means we use a tremendous amount of upholstery foam. When you use that much of any material you need to take a really hard look at it from an environmental standpoint. All of the foam upholstery material used in Global products is 100% free of CFCs (chlorofluorocarbons) to preserve the earth's ozone layer. We're also pushing the envelope by initiating the use of soy-based compounds in foam and water based glue adhesives to reduce our reliance on petro-chemical based polymers. It's not an easy change but we're working hard at it.



We created a new infrastructure that hadn't existed before.



Bundling up our scrap textiles for recycling was a first step in dealing with our production waste but we knew we could do better. So we actively sought a way to turn our scraps into something useful. We formed a partnership with Echoes in the Attic™, an eco-retailer who uses textile scraps in their handbag and pillow designs, and created an entirely new infrastructure that hadn't existed before.

At first, the mountain of fabric offcuts that Global produced seemed like an endless resource to a small entrepreneurial business, like Echoes in the Attic™. But Echoes has been so successful that now we can barely keep up with their demand! It's an example of how even an organization as large as Global needs to look beyond its own four walls to find new solutions.

turning scrap into style



Global's LEED partnership program supports architects and specifiers.

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System is the new benchmark for sustainable buildings. LEED certification is a system for evaluating the impact a building has on the environment, its use of energy and water and how it contributes to people's health and productivity. Global helps our customers meet LEED requirements by providing a wide range of Greenguard-certified products, specified in the LEED Green Building Rating System. Global's LEED Partnership Program offers project management support to architects and specifiers in obtaining LEED certification.



LEED partnership program





Global requires that all our partners meet our environmental policy.

supplier partnerships



In this age of outsourcing, the environmental policies and practices of many offshore companies raise some very real concerns. Global requires that all our business partners supply products and services that meet our own environmental standards. As an industry leader, our purchasing power enables our suppliers to invest in new, sustainable technologies within their own areas of expertise.

Good examples are the strong relationship we have with our partners in the textile industry that has accelerated our use of recycled fabrics, and the melamine supplier for our desking products that is a three-time winner of the Recycling Council of Ontario Award of Excellence. These partnerships have played a key role in what we commonly call the Global Family.





Every product should have a meaningful life span.



Every new product that's made consumes both energy and materials in its manufacture. If we are to achieve a sustainable future and a good quality of life, the products we make must have a meaningful lifespan.

At Global we make intelligent products that are designed and built to meet real needs and whose life span is appropriate to their use. Moreover, when we design products to be assembled we also design them to be easily taken apart so they can be serviced.

service, support sustainability

Unlike many imported products Global has a North American parts and service department to extend the useful life of our products. There is no reason that a chair should go to a landfill simply because a caster breaks or a control lever snaps due to some unforeseen incident. And every Global product is BIFMA approved to ensure durability, safety and a long life.

When Global began manufacturing office furniture we started with a simple philosophy: build a quality product that the average person could afford. Four decades later that same philosophy is an integral part of our social responsibility and commitment.

better products better future



A chair shouldn't end up in a landfill simply because a caster breaks.





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