

Protecting the environment and our climate are not just increasingly the focus of attention for the transport sector. Logistics centers, administrative buildings and other stationary facilities also provide many opportunities for handling energy more economically and preventing garbage.

Logistics centers not only consume electricity – they can also generate power. The Rhenus IHG Ibérica business center in Zaragoza, which was opened in 2007, is equipped with solar panels measuring 100 square meters. Depending on how much sunshine there is, up to 400 kilowatt hours of electricity can be generated on the center's roof. Rhenus can either use this power on the spot according to its needs or feed it into the national grid. Electricity generated by sunlight is environmentally-friendly, but it also provides economic benefits: Each kilowatt hour of "eco-power" generated on site also reduces the company's electricity bill. The managers at Zaragoza also decided to use clean options for the materials handling equipment. The center has modern electric forklift trucks. This avoids the use of diesel-powered machines.

The commercial operations also provide many opportunities for restricting the consumption of resources. You just have to have your eyes open. "It's often just a matter of everyday things," explains Johannes Silkenbeumer, Quality and Environmental Manager at Rhenus IHG in Hilden. A business site that wishes to obtain certification according to the ISO 14001 Environmental Management Standard must subject all its operations to an "eco check." "We use energy saving lamps to light the halls in Hilden. The light does not have to be on all the time, for example, in the toilets, so we use motion detectors to make energy savings." The same applies to the exterior lighting – lights do not have to be on all the time here either.

IT – A Major Energy Consumer

The way that information technology and communications technology equipment is handled in offices is an area that offers a huge potential for savings. Statisticians assume that IT equipment around the world is responsible for two percent of carbon dioxide emissions as a result of the power that machines require – that is the same figure as the airline sector. So equipment that is not required should be switched off. But even then PCs, screens, printers and fax machines often consume electricity. The solution is simple: "A multiple socket with an on-off switch can ensure that the units are completely separated from the power supply," says Silkenbeumer. Another important factor is paper consumption. The paperless office is still a pipe dream for the moment and paper consumption is increasing all the time. By cutting back on printing and copying, every office worker can help the environment and reduce costs. Then the trash bin becomes a money box.



Even the company car fleet can improve the eco-balance. The company vehicles at Rhenus are washed less frequently – if possible, just once a month. And only ecologically sound cleaning agents are used.

Conservation can only function at the workplace if individuals know what is possible and knowledge leads to action. So Rhenus IHG has set about training and motivating employees. Many minor improvements can produce ecological and economical effects that are tangible: "Some colleagues may find this mundane at times, but it is worth while in the long term," Johannes Silkenbeumer stresses.

