

Spotlight on the E

The E in ESG stands for Environment. A little letter but an enormous word. The environment is a pretty big deal, after all it is our entire world, our entire planet and everything contained within it from the world's biggest cities to its most remote wildernesses. Close your eyes and envisage in your mind the entire planet as it is seen from space, now zoom in to your home, your happy place or your business. Speeding down this enormous world shrinks and contracts as you reach your destination. Now imagine standing where you have landed and comprehending that entire planet from your new location, it makes you feel very small and it is difficult to believe that our own individual actions can affect the planet. However, if your neighbours, your street or your town all took the same actions and that then spread to neighbouring counties, cities, countries and then continents, what a difference that would make. Yes, a very idealistic notion but even if our acts can inspire one or two people to do better then the butterfly effect has been set in motion.

One of the missions for the ASAP Green Team is to encourage operators in the serviced apartment industry to look at their environmental impact and to take some accountability for that impact and look to improve upon existing policies and procedures for the benefit of the environment.

The Green Team are not a group of experts but we are a group of people that are passionate about the environment and for the continual improvement of sustainable operating. We are here to encourage discussion, to listen, to educate and to provide suggestions and solutions. So please do get in touch and let's keep the conversation going and do our bit to inspire change.

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The E in ESG may stand for Environment but there is another E that is one of any businesses biggest concerns right now; Energy. Here are some easy wins that we can all look at adopting that not only have environmental benefits but offer cost saving possibilities too.

How many serviced apartment operators does it take to change a lightbulb? It really doesn't matter as long as they are replacing it with an LED bulb. LED is a highly efficient lighting technology. They use around 75% less energy and last 25 times longer than incandescent lighting. Take a look around your apartments and offices, are you using LEDs? If not this is a good place to start.

Slow your flow. Look at installing low flow regulators these can help halve the amount of water used in an average five minute shower and low flow doesn't necessarily mean low pressure. Imagine all the showers in all your apartments and then consider how much water that equates to in a week, a month, a year. If you could halve that consumption there are savings to be made as well as being more efficient with your water usage.

Stay cool. We cant ask guests to turn the heating off and freeze but we can certainly encourage them to turn the thermostats down when they are not in the apartments. Consider using heating systems that allow you to monitor and control the thermostats in each apartment making it easy to adjust the temperatures in empty apartments.

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Today's Takeaway; Now, Better, Best

Do you have an Environmental Policy for your business? Probably you do but if you do not then consider writing one up and consider what your current practices are, what you could do better and what is the best practice.

What should an Environmental Policy contain? This should detail what your policies or aims are for dealing efficiently with a number of components of your business. How do you deal with Paper & Waste, how can you be efficient with Heating & Water, the types of product being used in Housekeeping, the Transportation that your company uses. It can also look at things like the types of Suppliers that you use and their own green credentials of the products they provide and how they provide them. Communication is another one, how are you communicating your efforts to your staff and guests to get them onboard with your efforts and how are you communicating it to the wider world so that you can help inspire others to do the same.

If you already have an Environmental Policy then the 'Now, Better, Best' study is still relevant. Are you acting upon your green statements or have they been written to keep up with the crowd but aren't being enforced? Accountability is key, be accountable for your own actions and for your company's actions. Challenge areas that you feel are being neglected and commit to the process and this will enact positive change.