

Green Achiever Newsletter

July 2010

Dear Deb,

Well the World Cup is over so what can keep us entertained now? A holiday perhaps? The schools will close soon for the long break so many people will have planned a break - another environmental debate. Do you do a 'Stay-cation' or go away? What are the off-setting arrangements for those who fly somewhere? If you stay here and take days out can you get there by train or must you drive - oh more carbon footprint? And all you wanted was to relax hey?! Well before you take a break there are a couple of things to think about - if you're going to renew your car what sort do you go for? We've an article below about the eco claims of some new cars. Then we've also included some information about Environmental Insurance - do you actually know about your pollution risks and are you sufficiently covered should something happen? While you're considering these questions I'll maybe be going green by not taking the car to the local hostelry to pass time with family, friends and neighbours. Long may the evenings last There are more celebrations in this issue also - another Silver Award and a progression to 4-stars for one of our Self-Assessed members as well. Great news for these companies and our congratulations go to them.

Mandy

Eco cars or Eco con?

Many businesses have found that the purchase choice surrounding their car fleet has taken a higher profile in their environmental thinking in recent years. But with electric cars still being some way off for real commercial value (despite the network of charging stations being set up in Birmingham and Coventry and the south Wales M4 corridor) what are the real options available? Most of the major car manufacturers now have 'eco motors' - in many cases these are not hybrids but greener, more efficient versions of their standard cars. There have been recent good reviews about the VW Golf Bluemotion, Renault Eco2, Ford ECONetic and the Skoda Greenline. The majority of these cars sip rather than gulp fuel and capture energy usually lost during braking. Many also have pointers telling drivers when it's most economical to change gears. So if you buy one of these eco-models will you be saving cash as well as reducing your impact on the environment? Well there are a few points that would influence any savings:-

1) Driving habits/style - staying within the 70mph speed limit on motorways rather than going at 80mph can save 10% on a fuel bill. For the real 'racers' attending an eco-driving course has saved some people as much as 60% on the annual fuel bill!

2) Comparisons of eco and standard models

Car MPG Gallons saving* Cost saving* Price premium ROI

VW Bluemotion 45.6 13 £71 £375 5+ years

SEAT Ecomotive 76.3 98 £535 £840 1.5 years

Fiesta ECONetic 76.3 22 £120 (£350) N/A

*Compared to standard model and based on 12,000 miles / year

So if you're looking to make changes going forward think about your driving style, the initial purchase price of an eco-car and what the resale value may be (according to Glass's guide the resale value is barely affected by a car having an eco-brand), fuel consumption figures and tax bands if applicable. There are undoubtedly savings (cash and environmental) that can be made but it may not be quite as simple as may first appear.

Pollution, the Environment and Business Insurance

The "Polluter Pays" principle means a business causing environmental damage should be financially liable well beyond merely cleaning up the resulting direct pollution (the recent tragic oil spillage in the Gulf of Mexico has brought this into sharp relief). Businesses could be liable for investigation costs and indeed be required to oversee remediation proposals, in conjunction with environmental specialists, and then submit a plan to the relevant Authority on how to reverse the effects of the pollution that has been caused. The risk to business in financial terms can be onerous, not to mention the bad publicity that can follow a pollution incident.

It is a common mistake to assume that standard public liability insurance will fully protect a company should an incident arise. Such policies are very limited in the event of a sudden and unforeseen incident and in most cases provide no cover whatsoever for gradual pollution. Environmental liability insurance can offer a comprehensive protection against a wide array of environmental risks in addition to providing cover for any liability for provisions under the Environmental Damage Regulations, including defence and clean-up costs. This specialist insurance also covers the cost of taking urgent action to avoid pollution where circumstances come to light that are an imminent threat, or to minimise the effects of pollution once detected. Prevention is better than cure; certainly when it comes to pollution!

The environmental and financial risks can be as damaging as the direct effects of the pollution itself. A solution can be to take a proactive approach by carrying out an environmental risk assessment (integral to the Green Achiever Silver Award audit process) and introducing management measures to minimise risk. For example, how many companies actually have a drainage plan and are aware of where water run-off from their premises goes - to the mains sewage system or out to a natural water course? So if there is an oil spill where will it end up? Are there any interceptors on drains? Etc. Such action will not only highlight the exposure to potential pollution risk areas, but could assist in securing competitive terms for Environmental Impairment Liability Insurance. So are you adequately covered or do you need to review your pollution risk factors?

Notices

1) E4environment want to thank everyone for the good wishes and support received at the celebration of their 10 year anniversary last month. We had a great party and the 'goodie bags' with items from Green Achiever members (plus a few retro sweets) went down a treat. Here's to the next 10 years being even more successful for all concerned and connected with E4environment and the Green Achiever Scheme.

2) E4environment will be moving offices at the beginning of next month. Our new address will be:-

Canon Court North · Abbey Lawn · Abbey Foregate · Shrewsbury · SY2 5DE

Our telephone and fax numbers will remain the same.

Company Profiles



Pavilions Shopping Centre Achieves Silver Award

The Pavilions Shopping Centre in Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire has become the first shopping centre in the UK to attain Green Achiever award silver status. Centre manager, Malcolm Crane, said: "We are very pleased and proud to be part of the scheme and to have achieved the silver award. Further commitment next year will hopefully lead to the gold award which would be the icing on the cake in our contribution towards helping the environment."

www.pavilionsshoppingcentre.co.uk

cognition®

Cognition move from 3 to 4 stars

Warwickshire based integrated communications agency, Cognition, has upgraded its status with the Green Achiever scheme. As a result of the second assessment in six months and its consistent improvement in green practices, Cognition has moved from Green Achiever three to four star self-assessment status. It has increased the recycling of office paper, computers and monitors, purchasing on eBay and Freecycle where possible and calculating its carbon footprint. Michelle de Bruyn is office manager at Cognition and comments: "We're now only one away from the maximum number of stars, and have our sights firmly set on achieving this. We're planning to install light and movement sensors to be more energy efficient, start using laptops rather than desktop computers to save energy and will be offsetting our carbon through tree planting programmes. The entire agency has bought into the Green Achiever scheme and we're all really proud to be making a difference." www.cognitiongroup.com

Sincerely,

Mandy Stoker
Green Achiever Scheme