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## Going green is good for the environment and the bottom line.

Green finally seems to be catching on — in practical ways that make sense for both the environment and small business bottom lines:

- When Garvey's Office Products Inc. moved to new warehouse and office space in Niles on Labor Day, the company replaced existing fluorescent light fixtures with more efficient ones. Now the cost of lighting 12,000 square feet of space is the same as the earlier cost of lighting 6,000 square feet.

That's both good-for-the-environment and good-for-the-bottom-line green.

But that's not all. Garvey's president, Bernie Garvey, notes that over the past two years, Garvey's customers "have become more concerned about how products are made. They're more environmentally aware (and concerned about) lessening their carbon footprint."

Thanks to a convergence of customer concerns, and technology and manufacturing advancements, green is more often making sense — in the office supply sector where Garvey's lives, obviously, but in other industries as well.

At Paylocity Corp., an Arlington Heights-based payroll processing company where the environment is a topmost concern, members of the employee Green Team hold their monthly meetings in a naturally lit room. Even though the room has "real" lighting for gray days, that's green, too.

The Green Team is an extension of Paylocity founder Steve Sarowitz's environmental passion, says President Steve Beauchamp. And while the Green Team is charged with finding ways Paylocity and its employees can enhance the environment, Paylocity does its share in its own marketplace as well.

"Our industry has been very paper intensive," Beauchamp says. To help counter the paper use, "we make everything available to our clients online. There's no need for them to store paper."

Existing customers have been slow to give up paper, but "more than half" of Paylocity's new clients go the paperless route, Beauchamp says.

What's interesting is that much of environmental push seems to be coming from employees — and their bosses are listening. "Employees are saying 'We should do something,' and employers are looking for ways to respond," says Garvey. As a result, he says, what had been "a percolating interest" in environmentally beneficial office products has "become a little deeper. Customers are asking what we have to address this concern."

Green can be found in such everyday office product categories as break room supplies, where Styrofoam cups remain "a big bugaboo," and recycled copy paper, which Garvey says "has gotten very good. You can't tell the difference, and there's only a slight difference in price." The trend goes beyond paper, however.

Furniture manufacturers, for example, "are using more environmentally friendly finishes — paints and solvents that don't damage the ozone," Garvey says. And Garvey's itself reuses boxes for shipping.

At Paylocity, green concerns literally hit home. Green Team captain Scott Lubert says that regular Green Team e-mails include tips "to help employees make their homes green." Recycling is a regular topic.