

# Going green

By Rick Myers, AquaCal - AutoPilot

Going green. What is it, and what does it mean? It is a term that we hear probably five times a day. We cannot go shopping, watch television or be at work without hearing those words. It is now a part of our daily lives, and because of this, there are probably as many imposters as there are real steps we can take to make our lives “greener.”

One thing is for sure, this movement is here to stay and there are many opportunities for us as business people, and more importantly as good citizens of planet Earth, that we can take to ensure we do not use more of our “carbon footprint” than necessary.

Whatever steps we take to become green, either as consumers or as a business trying to sell to consumers, it almost always requires an investment up front and it usually saves money.

We can do a range of things from the obvious to the sublime, and not everything requires an investment. UPS, the largest delivery service on this planet, has instituted several things that we can follow in our daily lives that do not require a large investment, but some of the changes require both discipline and an investment.

Although the savings UPS realized are in the millions of dollars, savings are relative to the size of any business. Almost every FSPA member has vehicles at the heart of their business, and it would be safe to say that we would not have business without vehicles. UPS did three things that require nothing more than a little thought; they turn off their delivery vehicles at every stop, route their vehicles to make no left turns and ensure that every one of their delivery trucks is checked every day for proper tire pressure.

The only investment for these items are tire gauges for every vehicle, discipline to turn off your vehicle for every stop or delivery of services, and perhaps a computer generated route program to make sure that all of our service or repair routes are the most efficient, while still delivering world class service to clients. Anyone can go to YouTube and look up “fuel savings,” and many other money saving ideas will come up. Proper tire pressure and fewer left turns results in safer drivers and fewer accidents on the road; this means lower insurance premiums and more savings for our businesses.

Other quick and easy things you can implement that will also save money include making your organization as paperless as possible, utilizing electronic billing and correspondence, and getting an energy audit. Whoever your electric provider is, they would be glad to come to your business or home and do a free energy savings audit. Some of their suggestions require an investment and many are easily adaptable. Again, just make the call to your energy provider.

As business people that build, service and repair products that consume energy, it is vital that we are up to speed on the latest energy-saving products in our industry. The company that is not aware of these products is losing business because the consumer is ready, willing and able to make investments if there is a savings to their power bill or if they simply want to be better citizens.

Products range from two-speed pumps, LED pool lighting, on site chlorine generation, and the latest technologies in heating, regardless of the type of heat they use. As professionals in our industry, it is our duty, and it also makes good business sense to make sure our clients have the best and most up-to-date information available to them so that can make educated decisions.

Even in these tough economic times, people are spending money on products that will help them save money. This is an established fact, as is the fact that this trend will continue for the foreseeable future. We need to be proactive in our knowledge of these products and be able to advise our consumers on what will save them the most money without sacrificing enjoyment of their pool and spa.

How can this be accomplished? Bring in the manufacturers that you purchase from and demand they bring you up to speed on their latest products. Have a “green day” at your retail store and ask manufacturers to display their energy-saving products. Attend any industry forum, and learn firsthand about the latest trends in green technology.

In closing, we are both consumers and sellers. Signing on to this movement can help our business on both ends, will improve the bottom line and is the right thing to do.