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The Three Rs of a Green Office Don't throw your investments away

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The three Rs of sustainability—reduce, reuse, recycle—are the most important basics for any Green endeavor. If you apply these, you'll find your sustainable office easy, simple, and you'll be pleased with your immediate positive results.

In the flooring industry, our biggest waste is carpet. Most carpet is made from oil, and the U.S. generates over four billion pounds of used carpet waste every year, with about 98 percent of this going into landfills. As landfills fill up or are closed, the price of using them rapidly increases. In manufacture alone, 1,000 square yards of carpet uses 440 barrels of oil to produce, and that's not counting transport or installation, and not counting the extremely high waste cost of placing used carpets in landfills.

Especially today, it's nothing short of criminal to throw oil into a landfill. The way we deal with this really is simple: we clean and refurbish carpet, extend its life, and keep it out of the landfill. We also stay clear of landfills by cleaning our customers' old carpets and donating them to Habitat for Humanity, or to low-cost building suppliers such as The Loading Dock.

It's not just oil, landfill use, and energy. Fresh water is increasingly a vital concern as worldwide supplies are diverted, polluted, and drained. We clean about 70 million square feet of carpet a year using low moisture and dry carpet cleaning methods. That means we save over 350,000 gallons of water in cleaning, and through all our reclamation activities, we save over 644,416 gallons of water every year. Best of all, it's a virtuous cycle—our dry cleaning increases the carpet's life, keeping it out of the waste stream that much longer!

As well as directly helping our customers with our Green methods and products, we also provide our customers with guides and training in the three Rs.

While global climate change, catastrophic resource loss, and environmental degradation (such as we see today in the Gulf coast) are immediate concerns for us, we always strive to provide overall health and safety measures for our clients. A clean, healthy space is a productive space: we see immediate, major benefits in increased staff productivity and retention, lowered absenteeism rates, and reduced insurance premium costs. All of this means better business and increased profits for us all—today, and into our shared future.

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