

COOLCALIFORNIA BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Surplus Service Fremont CA

A Surplus of Green Business Practices



Surplus Service president Lou Ramondetta and staff standing beside a variety of electronics that will be recycled or reused.

Surplus Service is an e-waste recycling business providing an efficient, simple and secure way to dispose of used electronics and surplus equipment while avoiding unnecessarily adding material to the landfill. Surplus Service has implemented many green initiatives as part of its standard operating procedures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Over 85% of the electronics that come into the facility are repaired, reused or re-marketed and the other 15% are recycled, leaving nothing to deposit in the landfill. It is estimated by Stopwaste that the company has removed tens of millions of pounds of hazardous waste and thousands of pounds of carbon emissions from the environment. In the past year, Surplus Service saved 24,849 kWh of energy, 27,590 gallons of water, and 5,177 pounds of CO₂.

The business reuses boxes, packing materials, and other items whenever possible. When products are sent to customers, flyers are included with the package, informing them that the box and packing supplies are reused, and asking them to reuse or recycle as well. Shipping cartons must contain a 30% or higher recycle content, shredded paper is used as a padding material



Surplus Service purchased their building because of its close proximity to transit.

for packaging, and wood pallets, pallet boxes, and containers are reused and recycled. They developed a partnership with United Parcel Service to reuse boxes, use OneDrive to share documents electronically, and use whiteboards instead of paper whenever possible. Significant waste reduction measures have resulted in the company going from using a small dumpster to a single garbage can for weekly refuse pick up.

BUSINESS SNAPSHOT

Surplus Service provides efficient, simple and secure upcycling to dispose of used electronics and surplus equipment needed while avoiding unnecessarily adding material to landfills.

Green Practices:

- Replaced all facility lighting with T8 CFL lights
- Installed motion detectors in bathroom and kitchen areas
- Reuse supplies for shipping
- Run all company vehicles on clean diesel

Cost Savings:

- Recharging forklift at night saves 30% in costs
- Converting lighting fixtures have saved 20% in energy costs
- Virtually no cost for packaging and shipping supplies
- Approximately \$11,000 has been saved through the reuse of office equipment and furniture



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BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Surplus Service purchased their building because of its close proximity to transit. New employees are given transit information and pickups are arranged at Bay Area Rapid Transit stations. Company vehicles use clean diesel instead of gas. All office equipment and furniture in the facility are reused, and they have reduced the amount of waste they generate. It is Surplus Service's team policy to use natural lighting while working in the building rather than turning on fixture lighting. Indoor lighting is rarely used (motion sensors have been installed) and when needed, they have the ability to turn on only half of the T8 CFL lighting fixtures. New employees are trained in recycling and lighting practices right after they are hired.



Air Resources Board's Deputy Executive Officer Edie Chang with Business of the Year Surplus Service.



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Surplus Service has been very involved with sustainability education in their community. For the Boy Scouts, they designed and sponsored a three-day Eagle Scout Sustainability Badge, focusing on energy conservation, greenhouse gas reductions, water savings, recycling, and green initiatives. The program was so popular that the Scouts asked to do monthly recycling events! They also mentor students at local colleges, work with community leaders, offer internships, and participate in green events.

The Federal Small Business Administration's (SBA's) Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) filmed Surplus Service's green efforts to promote sustainability programs and highlighted the use of SBDC's resources. The video is being used by the SBA on SBDC websites and other public relations forums to help educate other businesses and organizations.



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