



## Greening business for the future

A lot of companies are good at talking up their green efforts, issuing press releases with each tree saved. Far fewer end up transforming their businesses so that they now consider the environmental impact before making almost any decision.

**Pharmasave** has been proactive on this front, earning them a first-ever Commitment to Care & Service Award for Green Leadership.

The company has elevated its corporate standards and put into place multiple green policies to ensure that it is seen as a strong leader on this front. First, it wants to prevent a potential 20 million plastic bags from hitting landfills each year, by offering both 100% biodegradable bags—which cost the company an estimated five per cent more to produce than regular shopping bags—and reusable bags, that are priced at around 99 cents per unit.

The paper in the Pharmasave flyers also contains up to 50% recycled newspaper fibre and uses vegetable-based ink. Other materials are also environmentally friendly, including pharmacy labels,



Representing Pharmasave is Sue Paish, CEO, Pharmasave Drugs (National) Ltd.

backers and other stationary. Paper products are certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), meaning they come from responsibly managed forests and verified recycled sources.

Pharmasave is trying to make it easier for its customers to dispose of certain items, including rechargeable batteries and cell phones. Drop-off boxes are included in each store and, when full, are shipped to the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation (RBRC) of Atlanta.

Customers can also get rid of expired and unused medications (as well as non-prescription drugs, herbal products and vitamin and mineral supplements). It's a valuable service, as throwing away some items in the regular garbage can pose serious threats to children or animals. Drugs that are flushed down the drain are dangerous to the environment because they can end up in lakes, rivers, streams and eventually drinking water.

The green efforts extend to décor too. The Pharmasave Pacific Region has created a "healthy work and shipping environ-

ment" with its new Eco-Décor store design packages. Eco-friendly materials (that have been recycled and are recyclable) are being used in all new stores, and as older stores undergo renovations, they will also adopt these standards. One example is the use of primary flooring, which only needs to be washed with water. Also, installed carpeting contains between 70 to 95% recycled content, no volatile chemicals and no volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

Finally, Pharmasave's newly built national office makes all efforts to use recycled and recyclable materials and the design takes full advantage of natural light. As well, bike racks and showers are available, and the office is located close to transit.

The judges were unanimous in their high praise for Pharmasave's efforts. One judge says she is "thrilled" to see a pharmacy company making such an effort, "from the top down," while others ardently hope this "amazing initiative" will lead other organizations and pharmacies to follow suit.

—Adam Pletsch

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