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## MORE BUSINESSES RECOGNIZE BENEFITS OF GOING GREEN

### Law firm adopts green policies, aims to meet ABA's reduction challenge

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Daily Reporter Staff Writer

If its latest initiative is any indication, Porter Wright Morris & Arthur LLP has been bitten by the "green" bug that's steadily spurring environmentally responsible change in everything from automobiles to construction practices.

One week ago, the firm launched "Porter Wright Goes Green — Reduce, Reuse, Recycle", a comprehensive program meant to encourage conservation efforts among attorneys and staff in its six offices.

Apparently, helping clients navigate greener waters had an affect.

"As we help our clients face important issues in climate change, real estate development, and tax incentives, we are continuously looking for ways to improve our own practices and efforts to be more focused on reducing our environmental impact— both in the office and at home," said Robert Meyer Jr., chair of Porter Wright's Green Practice Group.

In addition to a "Go Green" kit — complete with a tote bag for groceries, a tire gauge (properly inflated tires help save gas and money), a brochure about American Electric Power's Green Pricing Option program (which allows customers to support the company's purchase of Renewable Energy Certificates), and a ceramic coffee mug for beverages (to discourage use of disposable cups) — the firm will offer employees tips on sustainable practices via monthly e-mails.

Further, Porter Wright uses recycled toner cartridges for its printers and computer monitors with invoked screen savers to reduce power consumption; purchases paper from a provider that produces paper from a six-year cycle of

planted trees; and uses stationery products made from a minimum of 30 percent post-consumer recycled content.

Porter Wright's Columbus office is located in one of the city's greenest buildings, Meyer said. (Porter Wright also has offices in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dayton, Washington D.C., and Naples, Fla.) Its home — the Huntington Center at 41 S. High St. — has an Energy Star Rating of 95 (on a 100-point scale) and received awards in 1999, 2002, 2003 and 2004 for efficient operations and reduced power consumption.

The building operates at an average utility cost of \$1.30 per square foot — 30 percent lower than the standard consumption rate of \$1.85 per square foot for buildings of a similar size, according to Porter Wright.

The firm also is participating in the American Bar Association-Environmental Protection Agency Law Office Climate Challenge, which focuses on waste reduction and best practices for office paper management.

An informal survey conducted by ABA project organizers indicated that the typical lawyer — on a yearly basis — uses up to 100,000 sheets of copy paper, the production of which releases up to 4.5 tons of carbon dioxide, as well as emissions of other greenhouse gases.

However, the paper management practices recommended by the EPA for challenge participants have the potential to reduce those emissions by up to 50 percent.

Since taking up the challenge, Porter Wright has committed to using office supplies made of recycled materials, encouraging double-sided printing and copying for internal documents, and providing bins for recycled paper.

The firm claims it has been counseling clients on environmental matters since as early as the 1960s, but has increasingly assisted clients with projects of an environmental nature in recent years through its Green Practice Group.

The interdisciplinary group — comprising more than 20 attorneys with knowledge about construction and environmental, real estate, transactional and intellectual property law — helps businesses address the issues surrounding environmental efficiency, including their responsibilities as good corporate citizens.

"We really want to do our part to reduce the negative impact our business can have on the environment," said Robert "Buzz" Trafford, managing partner at Porter Wright.

"We want to do more than just help our clients," he added. "We also want to provide support to efforts to help the broader community understand what it can do to improve the environment today and for future generations."

And Porter Wright isn't the only one with such a mission.

Alex Lagusch, executive director of the Columbus Bar Association, said his organization is developing its own internal environmental plan to conserve and promote renewable resources.

"Our environmental law committee is also exploring how we can engage the broader legal community in these efforts," he said.

"Lawyers change the world every day through their work on behalf of clients. Now, by making environmentally responsible choices in their personal and professional lives, they have an opportunity to bring about even more positive change in their communities," he added.