I t has been said that “your only choice, whatever our
dogma, is to protect the Earth. This is our common prog-
ress or our common ruin. There is nothing in between.” 1
It is incumbent upon attorneys to help protect the
Earth because we are part of the problem. The typical
attorney uses between 20,000 and 100,000 sheets of copy
paper alone per year, much of it wastefully, resulting in environmen-
tal harm and unnecessary expense. 2

Something as simple as resetting printers to print docu-
ments double-sided results in significantly less waste as well
as cost savings. One firm that followed this practice reduced
its paper use by 1,700,155 sheets, which saved 150 trees and
61,604 gallons of water and prevented the release of 97 tons of
CO2 emissions. It also resulted in a yearly savings of more than
$13,000, a true “win-win” for the firm and the environment. 3

Discussed in this article are practical steps you can take to
“green” your legal practice—be it a firm, in-house legal depart-
ment, nonprofit, or public entity—and in so doing, reduce
office waste and costs.

Bar Association Programs

An ideal way to green your law firm is to take advantage of
an existing bar association program. Various programs exist at
the national, state, and local bar levels. 4

Participation in a local (municipal or county) bar asso-
ciation green program is particularly advantageous because of
the enhanced ability to work closely with bar staff and local
attorneys in a way that enhances the local community. One
such program, offered through the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar
Association (CMBRA), is profiled below.

Should participation in a bar association program not be
practical, you can still implement into your legal practice any
of the bar or individual firm green initiatives discussed in this
article.

Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association Green Initiative

Launched in 2008, the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar
Association’s (CMBRA) Green Initiative may well be the most
comprehensive local bar program of its type in the United
States. 5 The program is coordinated by the CMBA’s Green
Initiative Committee, composed of a broad cross section of bar
association members employed at law firms as well as non-
lawyer affiliates (e.g., court reporting firms). The core mission
of the committee is to promote sustainable environmental
practices at law firms. The capstone is the Green Certification
program, which certifies law firms that adopt environmentally
responsible practices. More than 50 Cleveland area firms are
now certified. The CMBA Green Certification criteria include
firm recycling, responsible paper use, and energy-saving
efforts. 6

Recently, the CMBA added a Green+ Certification level
for those firms that demonstrate a commitment to the envi-
ronment above and beyond that required for basic certifica-
tion. 7 Green Certified firms proudly display the “CMBA Green Certified”
or “CMBA Green Certified+” logo on their websites and
other marketing materials.

The Green Initiative Committee also holds an annual
“Greener Way to Work Week.” During that week, all bar asso-
luation members and affiliates are encouraged to take green
committees to work (public transportation, carpooling, biking,
etc.) and participate in “green themed” events, including
presentations on green retrofitting of office and homes and
local bicycling initiatives. The week concludes with a luncheon
program held to honor those who are green certified and to
present awards to firms engaged in exemplary green practices. 8

The luncheon includes participation by green vendors (e.g.,
recycling companies) which are provided bourses to return for
financial support of the luncheon. Local governmental enti-
ties have embraced the event, including the local mass transit
authority, which has provided discounted mass transit tickets
to those attending.

The CMBA committee also created a Carbon Footprint
Calculator for legal services organizations, which can be used
to determine the carbon footprint per hour of legal services
rendered. The CMBA published the calculator along with other
useful information—including recycling information—in the
bar journal and posted it on the committee website. 9

The Green Initiative Committee has also partnered with
local organizations and companies to promote green activities.

One such effort focused on a significant environmental hazard:
e-waste. Through a partnership with two local companies that
refurbish computers for donation to local urban schools, the
CMBA encouraged local law firms to donate their unwanted
computers toward that effort and assisted in collecting them. 10

Firm Green Initiatives

Law firms and offices are required—as part of the CMBA
Green Certification program—to create their own green com-
mittees to implement the CMBA certification requirements and
serve as a liaison to the CMBA Green Initiative Committee. 11

The firm green committees have served as incubators of
sustainable office practices which go beyond the CMBA certi-
fication requirements and are worthy of duplication by other
firms. 12 Below are some examples of firm initiatives:

- Earth Day programs, featuring speakers, green vendors, ref-
fuses, and prizes for those that bicycle, carpool, or take public
transportation to work that day. One law firm featured local
grocery/organic wine and appetizers at its program.
- Bicycle clubs that promote recreational bicycling and the
use of bicycling as transportation to work. One law firm
arranged for the free use of showers for its participants.
- Green programs in collaboration with other ten-
teants of the same office building and the building
owner. One firm’s efforts led to a bioliquid recyl-
cing program and a green fair in the building lobby.
- Screen savers for firm computers that remind personnel to
turn off their computers at the end of the day.
- Compost programs for coffee grounds and leftover office
food.
- Discontinuance of disposable cups and water bottles.
- Adoption of a “single stream” waste-handling program
wherein all non-food office waste is put in the same con-
tainer and is separated later by the waste handling company.
- Green giveaways—such as reusable grocery totes with the
firm logo, BPA-free water bottles, solar calculators, and
flashlights made from recycled materials—along with infor-
mation about the beneficial impact of their use.

January/February 2015 · THE FEDERAL LAWYER · 75
 It has been said that "[y]our only choice, whatever our dogma, is to protect the Earth. This is our common progress or our common ruin. There is nothing in between." It is incumbent upon attorneys to help protect the Earth because we are part of the problem. The typical attorney uses between 20,000 and 190,000 sheets of copy paper alone per year, much of it wastefully, resulting in environmental harm and unnecessary expense.

Something as simple as resetting printers to print double-sided significantly reduces waste. If one firm followed this practice, it could save over 1,769,155 sheets, which saved 150 trees and 61,604 gallons of water and prevented the release of 97 tons of CO2 emissions. It also resulted in a yearly savings of more than $13,000, a true "win-win" for the firm and the environment.

Discussed in this article are practical steps you can take to green your legal practice—be it a firm, in-house legal department, nonprofit, or public entity—and do so in ways that reduce office waste and costs.

Bar Association Programs

An ideal way to green your law firm is to take advantage of an existing bar association program. Various programs exist at the national, state, and local bar levels.

Participation in a local (municipal or county) bar association green program is particularly advantageous because it expands the enhanced ability to work closely with bar staff and local attorneys in a way that enhances the local community. Each program, offered through the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association (CMBIA), is profiled below.

Should participation in a bar association program not be practical, you can still implement into your legal practice any of the bar or individual firm green initiatives discussed in this article.

Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association (CMBIA)

Launched in 2008, the Cleveland Metropolitan Bar Association’s (CMBIA) Green Initiative may well be the most comprehensive local bar program of its type in the United States. The program is coordinated by the CMBIA’s Green Initiative Committee, composed of a broad cross section of bar association members employed at law firms as well as non-lawyer affiliates (e.g., court reporting firms). The core mission of the committee is to promote sustainable environmental practices at law firms. The capstone is the CMBIA Green Certification program, which certifies law firms that adopt environmentally responsible practices. More than 50 Cleveland area firms are now certified. The CMBIA Green Certification criteria include firm recycling, responsible paper use, and energy-saving efforts.

Recently the CMBIA added a Green+ Certification level for those firms that demonstrate a commitment to the environment above and beyond that required for basic certification. Green Certified firms proudly display the "CMBIA Green Certified" or "CMBIA Green Certified+" logo on their websites and other marketing materials.

The Green Initiative Committee also holds an annual "Greener Way to Work Week." During that week, all bar association members and affiliates are encouraged to take green commutes to work (public transportation, carpooling, biking, etc.) and participate in "green themed" events, including presentations on green retrofitting of office and homes and local bicycling initiatives. The week culminates with a luncheon program held to honor those who are green certified and to present awards to firms engaged in exemplary green practices.

The luncheon includes participation by green vendors (e.g., recycling companies) who are provided hoedads in return for financial support of the luncheon. Local government entities have embraced the event, including the local mass transit authority, which has provided discounted mass transit tickets to those attending.

The CMBIA also created a Carbon Footprint Calculator for legal services organizations, which can be used to determine the carbon footprint per hour of legal services rendered. The CMBIA published the calculator along with other useful information—including recycling information—in the bar journal and posted it on the committee website.

The Green Initiative Committee has also partnered with local organizations and companies to promote green activities. One such effort focused on a significant environmental hazard: e-waste. Through a partnership with two local companies that refurbish computers for donation to local urban schools, the CMBIA encouraged local law firms to donate their unwanted computers toward that effort and assisted in collecting them.

Firm Green Initiatives

Law firms and offices are required—as part of the CMBIA Green Certification program—to create their own green committees to implement the CMBIA certification requirements and serve as a liaison to the CMBIA Green Initiative Committee.

The green committee has served as incubators of sustainable office practices which go beyond the CMBIA certification requirements and are worthy of duplication by other firms.

Below are some examples of firm initiatives:

- Earth Day programs, featuring speakers, green vendors, raffles, and prizes for those bicycle, carpool, or take public transportation to work that day. One law firm featured local green/organic wine and appetizers at its program.
- Bicycle clubs that promote recreational bicycling and the use of bicycling as transportation to work. One law firm arranged for the free use of showers for its participants.
- Green programs in collaboration with other tenants of the same office building and the building owner. One firm’s efforts led to a buildingwide recycling program and a green fair in the building lobby.
- Screen savers for firm computers that remind personnel to turn off their computers at the end of the day.
- Compost programs for coffee grounds and leftover office food.
- Discontinuance of disposable cups and water bottles.
- Adoption of a "single stream" waste-handling program wherein all non-food office waste is put in the same container and is separated later by the waste-handling company.
- Green giveaways—such as reusable grocery totes with the firm logo, BPA-free water bottles, solar calculators, and flashlights made from recycled materials—along with information about the beneficial impact of their use.
The reviews are contributed by the Legal Information Institute, a nonprofit activity of Cornell Law School. The reviews include an in-depth look at two cases plus executive summaries of other cases before the Supreme Court. The executive summaries include a link to the full text of the preview.

HOLT V. HOBBIS (3-6827)

Court Brief U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit

Issue
Does a prison's grooming policy, which prohibits all beards except quarter-inch beards grown for certain medical reasons, violate the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA) by barring an inmate from growing a full-length beard in accordance with his religious beliefs?

Questions As Framed for the Court by the Parties
I. Whether the Arkansas Department of Corrections' no-beard grooming policy violates the RLUIPA.
II. Whether a full-length beard would satisfy the security goals sought by the policy.
III. Whether the no-beard grooming policy violates the petitioner's First Amendment right to practice his beliefs as he believes it is supposed to be practiced by the warding of the board.

Case File
The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit has decided that the no-beard grooming policy does not violate the RLUIPA, but this court should decide the matter since it has not done so and should rule whether grooming policies of any Department of Corrections that does not allow for a religious exception exempts prisoners from participating in a particular activity.

Discussion
In 2000, Congress enacted the RLUIPA to provide protection for the free exercise of religion in several contexts, including incarceration. RLUIPA states, "No government shall impose...a substantial burden on the religious exercise of a person unless it...is, in combination, a compelling governmental interest; and: (B) is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling governmental interest."

The definition of "religious exercise" in RLUIPA "includes any exercise of religion, whether or not compelled by, or central to, a system of religious belief.

In 2011, Gregory Holt (Abdul Malik Muhammad), an ADC inmate, sought permission through the prison grievance process to wear a full-beard beard in accordance with his Muslim faith. Despite his belief that his beards required that he grow a beard and that the ADC grooming policy hampered his religious practice, he was denied. Later, the inmate was diagnosed dermatological issues. The inmate viewed this, based on his religious belief, as a concern to his religious freedom. However, the court held that the RLUIPA did not apply to this case.

Holt, according to the court, has cleared a few of the ideas discussed above, which will help to protect the earth and improve your bottom line as well. "

Endnotes
1The quotation is attributed to Barbara Ward, economist and a member of the British Parliament.  
2ABA-EPA LAW OFFICE CLIMATE CHALLENGE WASTE/WATER PROGRAM.