

Case study



Eco Tech Solutions

With a 60% reduction in waste sent to landfill and significant resource savings, Eco Tech Solutions (ecostore's manufacturing division) is benefiting from a comprehensive Environmental Management System (EMS). General Manager Tony Morpeth discussed the progress with Enviro-Mark®NZ Programme Manager, Charlie Bartlett.

Why did Eco Tech Solutions decide to focus on its Environmental Management plan?

As ecostore's manufacturing division, it was important to transparently reflect ecostore's environmental position. The 'eco' space is a very confusing area. A lot of companies pass themselves off as 'eco' to the extent that it has been termed in the industry as 'green-washing'. This is where the Enviro-Mark certification comes in. When consumers see the Enviro-Mark logo they can now make a conscious decision to purchase products knowing that they are supporting a company that truly has people's health, the environment, and social responsibility at the forefront. The Enviro-Mark Platinum certification removes the confusion for the consumer and adds value to the ecostore brand.

How did you go about that?

We researched all the options available both domestically & internationally. We saw that the Enviro-Mark certification would provide us with everything we were looking for. Their five-step programme provides the platform for us to build off. The conclusion, being Diamond certified, and achieving an ISO 14001:2004 certification would provide international recognition and evidence to global consumers of ecostore's commitment to robust environmental systems.



Enviro-Mark®NZ Platinum:
Embedded systems for effectively managing environmental risks and ensuring legal compliance

Enviro-Mark Platinum certification means that an organisation:

- Has implemented operational procedures to control activities that could have an impact on the environment;
- Monitors and measures the environmental effects of its activities;
- Communicates internally and externally;
- Has developed, implemented and tested an environmental emergency plan;
- Has formalised the roles and responsibilities for people working for and on behalf of the organisation;
- Has set objectives and targets for driving continual improvement, and has programmes detailed to meet those targets;
- Has identified and evaluated the significant environmental aspects and impacts of its activities, products and services;
- Has produced an environmental policy statement;
- Is fully compliant with New Zealand's most common and widely applicable health and safety and environmental legislation.

"We saw that the Enviro-Mark certification would provide us with everything we were looking for."

"The Enviro-Mark Platinum accreditation removes the confusion for the consumer."

You've achieved Enviro-Mark Platinum certification now. Tell us about some of the improvements you have made along the way.

We now separate all our rubbish into their various streams: steel, plastic, cardboard which has led to a 60% reduction in waste going to landfill. We schedule all our production so that the primary driver is to minimise our energy use and reduce our water consumption. An example of how we have taken our EMS to the smallest level: we wash & sanitise all our own toilet handtowels, factory cleaning cloths & overalls internally. Re-using all our cleaning cloths over and over is better for the environment. We use environmentally-friendly cleaning detergents – made by us - in the process.

Any other benefits apart from cost savings?

A large number of our staff have told me that through what they have seen at work, they have improved their own recycling habits at home. They are also mentioning how they are influencing their friends' recycling habits. In short our EMS programme is spreading beyond our own four walls into the wider community, which is fantastic to be a part of.

What are the environmental challenges of operating a manufacturing facility?

To be the leader in their field ecostore has committed to a very progressive research and development programme. ecostore is expanding domestically and internationally, and continually developing new products. For us as their manufacturing facility it is very important we continually review our processes and procedures to ensure our EMS is keeping pace. We need to be very dynamic, as does our EMS.

What challenges to implementing an EMS have you encountered along the way?

As one example: when we were attempting to track where stormwater goes from our car park. We had to communicate with government departments and local councils. This turned what we thought would be a simple process into a rabbit warren! The 'system' sometimes doesn't make it easy to be good. We got there in the end.

What has been the key to your success?

The most important thing was that we knew exactly what we were heading into. We had 100% commitment from our Board members and management. We resourced ourselves appropriately, both financially and with staff dedicated to this process. We also know this is a journey, one of continual improvement, and we are committed to being the best we can be.

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