

Buy Local. Be Green.

Keep purchases local to reduce your carbon footprint

By Molly Killien

What do the Steamboat Springs post office, your car and a U.S. dollar bill have in common? Besides the fact that many Steamboat Springs residents use these items daily, all three symbolize reasons why buying products locally helps the environment and the Steamboat Springs community.

The concept of “Buy Local. Be Green.” can be complex when it comes to purchasing materials. A simple example to determine “Which product is greener?” would be to compare products like recycled barn wood from the east coast that is shipped to Colorado with wood that is sold here in town. While both are good “green” options, buying a product locally minimizes the cost, waste and time it takes to ship products into the valley. In cases like this, it can be tricky but it’s greener to buy locally.

Here’s how buying locally reduces a customer’s carbon footprint:

- By choosing to purchase from a local store rather than shopping from a website or catalog, customers save on postage, decrease the amount of wasteful packing materials used during shipment and save valuable time.
- Shopping locally rather than going out of town saves gasoline, car maintenance is reduced and casual spending (on food, etc.) is limited, not to mention avoiding traffic.
- Buying local saves you money and helps the environment!

The economic benefits of buying local are simple; it cuts out the middleman, puts more money into the local economy, and reduces transportation costs and environment-destroying, energy-wasting long hauls.

Steamboat is home to a local company that is as green as its name implies. The Steve Green Company located in the Copper Ridge Business Park, is a triple threat when it comes to being sustainable and green. Not only is “green” in the company’s name and green products are what they sell, the company is making an effort to reduce the carbon footprint of their business – one customer at a time. Known regionally for their professional, commercial-grade, industrial-strength cleaning supplies at bulk prices and the best, most durable cleaning equipment available in today’s marketplace, the Steve Green Company lives by the notion, “greener is better.”

“One of our company’s biggest advertising tools is driving the recognizable fleet of Steve Green Company delivery trucks around town,” says **Michael David, employee of the Steve Green Company**. “With our Steve Green Company delivery truck fleet we are able to keep 100 cars from having to come visit us, which helps us provide a service to our clients and is better for the environment.”

“Being green and having green products has been what our business has been about since day one,” notes **Jim Barker, owner of the Steve Green Company**. “Over the years there have not been many changes to our company and our daily operations. The biggest changes that have occurred have been the green products available on the market and how we can provide them to our customers.” Barker also notes that providing products that are environmentally sensitive as well as having a wide variety to choose from is important to the philosophy of the Steve Green Company.

“We are not quite the Costco of Routt County but we are really close,” notes **David**. “We sell recycled paper products, recycled trash can liners, Mrs. Meyer’s Clean Day products and our own line of green chemicals that are sold by the gallon. These products are green, high-quality and our pricing is competitive.”

Rob Robbins, owner of local company A.N.R. Cleaning Services has been a fan of the Steve Green Company for years. “I have done business with the Steve Green Company for over four years now,” notes **Robbins**. “I am in here weekly because of the customer service and the product lines they offer. I can always count on service with a smile when I do business with the Steve Green Company.”

David reiterates the importance of “Buy Local. Be Green.” when discussing the company’s culture, values and role within town. “Here at the Steve Green Company we pride ourselves in having both a very strong commercial business as well as being open to the public and residential businesses too. We hope to supply Steamboat businesses with everything they might need.”

With this said, doing a little local research goes a long way when shopping in Steamboat Springs. Our business community works hard to carry a variety of items, some you know about and some you may not be familiar with. Some local companies might be willing to stock specialty items upon request, make the effort to be green by keeping your dollars locally.

While each person may have their own reason to purchase here in town, being green and thinking sustainably is just one more reason to “Buy Local.” Whether it is the relationship you are building, the carbon footprint you leave or the tax dollars that help support strong community amenities; buying locally is the smartest way to go.

Side bar:

- Your carbon footprint is reduced when you shop locally.
- It’s less harmful to our environment to ship in quantity to a local store than to ship individually to you through the Internet or catalogue shopping.
- Eco friendly and organic items are becoming more readily available locally

Buy Local Products including tote bag, stamp, stainless steel water bottle, bumper sticker and notepads are now available through the Steamboat Springs Chamber Resort Association. Please contact Amy Minotto for more details at 875-7004.

Attention Chamber Members! Remember to download the “Buy Local” logo from www.steamboatchamber.com to use in your company’s marketing and promotional materials!