



2003 EnviroGuard Company Profile

Large Business Operations Category

Boise Consumer Co-op is both a neighborhood market and a full-service cooperative grocery. The Co-op has 120 employees serving 20,000 members and the general public. The Co-op is best known for its natural and specialty products and commitment to the judicious use of resources.

The Co-op's location and limited available parking encourages employees and shoppers to walk, bike, carpool, or use other alternative transportation to access the store. The Co-op provides a mail-order service to help minimize the commute time for distant shoppers. The Co-op also encourages frequent shoppers to use reusable shopping bags and offers five-cent, per bag credit for each reused bag.

The Co-op provides a wide selection of organic produce, baked goods, and other products. Produce and other perishable food products past the shelf life date, but still safe for consumption, are offered first to employees and then to local farmers for livestock feed or composting. Also, they sell native and drought tolerant landscape plants in the spring and summer.

Recycling is a major component of the Co-op's operations. Recycling bins are located throughout the store and offices for paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, aluminum, and other packaging recycling. The materials are sorted into barrels and self-hauled to Boise Recycling.

The Co-op recently installed skylights and full-spectrum lighting to save energy and increase the store's ambiance. An automatic light-dimming feature is in the plans to help further reduce energy consumption. The refrigeration system in the store was also upgraded to allow for the capture of the compressor heat and used to heat hot water. In addition, they added vinyl strips to their open-front coolers to help minimize lost refrigeration. Likewise, a vestibule was constructed at the entrance to minimize the loss of heating and air conditioning each time the doors open.

The Co-op is committed to providing alternative products that are less toxic and created from sustainable resources.

Other pollution prevention efforts at the Boise Co-op include:

1. Recognized by the Renewable Northwest Project for meeting the clean air challenge;
2. Leading commercial participant in Idaho Power's Green Power program (commitment to purchase 10% from green power); and
3. Replaced five 30-gallon water heaters with one 200-gallon, energy efficient model.