

GOING GREEN WITH ISO14001

Jodie Read takes a look at the commercial, legal, and financial benefits of implementing an Environmental Management System which meets the requirements of the ISO14001 standard.

In the February edition of Pro Landscaper we considered how implementing a formal Quality Management System to ISO9001 could prove beneficial to businesses. ISO14001 is a similar Standard which focuses on environmental performance. It can be implemented alongside ISO9001 (and other Standards such as OHSAS18001 for Health and Safety) or on a standalone basis.

Like ISO9001, the decision to implement ISO14001 is a voluntary one. However, more and more landscapers are embracing it. Once again, the main driver (in our experience) is linked to the potential commercial benefits of being able to tick the right boxes when filling out Pre Qualification Questionnaires and associated tender responses.

However, there are additional reasons that companies choose to pursue this green standard.

LEGAL

There's a lot of environmental legislation. Without a structured framework in place, companies struggle to even know what legislation applies to them, let alone being able to demonstrate that they comply with it. But ignorance is no defence in the eyes of the law. Despite the importance of legislation, we find that companies are unaware of their requirements, and can inadvertently break the law. Examples we've seen include a landscaping company that burned off its waste (pictured) without first obtaining an exemption under the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010. (Help on this matter is available via the Environment Agency website. See http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Business/D7_exemption.pdf).



Most landscapers are aware that the storage, supply and use of pesticides is regulated (by the Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986. However, without effective systems to ensure that operatives have been appropriately trained and hold the relevant certificates of competence, it is easy to fall foul of the law.

These are just a couple of examples of breaches that we have encountered. Both were easily rectified, however, they could easily have been avoided in the first place. Clause 4.3.2 of ISO14001 requires organisations to "identify and have access to the applicable legal requirements" and Clause 4.5.2 requires periodic evaluation of legal compliance be undertaken, as well as records kept.

In our experience, by knowing what legislation is applicable, and checking that the business remains compliant, companies

ABOUT JODIE READ



Jodie Read is Managing Director of Penarth Management Limited, which specialises in the provision of compliance consultancy and training for quality, environmental, and health and safety management. She and her colleagues help companies implement and maintain management systems, such as ISO9001 (Quality), ISO14001 (Environmental)

1 This company that carried out burning of waste was unaware of its need

of an exemption.
2 Simple changes such as recycling nursery pots can save money.



with ISO14001 are more likely to remain on the right side of the law.

FINANCIAL

By being aware of the way in which the business impacts on the environment, it is often easy to implement simple changes that save money. One landscaper introduced better waste segregation (resulting in improved re-use and recycling of nursery pots and compost bags) and was able to obtain a smaller skip, which cost less money to hire.

The saying "you can't manage what you don't measure" is well worn, but it's so true that it's worth repeating. When considering environmental issues, it becomes apparent that measuring and monitoring key aspects can help a company reduce costs. Examples of measuring and monitoring activities that have a positive impact on finances include:

- Transport: by reviewing grounds maintenance teams' journeys, one firm revised all of the regular routes to ensure grouping of jobs within geographic areas, resulted in fewer journeys and lower fuel costs.
- Energy: by understanding how and when energy is consumed, and by what processes (such as office lighting or greenhouse heating), companies have been able to identify opportunities for switching off appliances or changing operations in order to reduce energy consumption (and the associated cost).

and OHSAS18001 (Health and Safety).

The company is an affiliate member of the British Association of Landscape Industries (BALI) and Jodie is one of only a few approved ROLO health and safety trainers in the country.

If readers have any queries regarding ISO9001 and how to derive real value from the Standard, please contact Jodie at jodie@penarth.co.uk or telephone 029 2070 3328.