

Imperial aims for greener supply chains

Supply chain and logistics leader Imperial Logistics has added impetus to its drive for greener supply chains with a two-pronged energy saving initiative that encompasses its transport fleet and warehouses, as well as innovative water saving, waste management and recycling drives.

“Sustainability is a value that we take very seriously, and many pioneering projects across our operations are significantly reducing our carbon footprint,” comments Imperial Logistics Health, Safety and Sustainability (HSS) Executive Lucky Maluleke.

He reports that one high-tech initiative that is delivering big benefits is the installation of state-of-the-art *“Aero Kits”* on Imperial Retail Logistics vehicles. The current Aero Kit design utilises side skirting on the trucks that deflects the wind around the wheel arches and reduces turbulence. It has already realised fuel savings of up to 8%. Maluleke reveals, however, that Imperial aims to improve on that, with development underway of a kit that closes off virtually the entire truck from wind friction.

The group’s installation of online metering in warehouses, cold rooms, battery rooms and wash bays is also allowing Imperial to monitor the usage of electricity and water, and deploy energy saving interventions.

In Centurion, at Imperial Health Sciences’ head office, electricity consumption has been reduced by more than 39 000 kWhs, as a result of this power saving drive. Diesel consumption has been cut from 9 452 litres to 4 311 litres through the use of generators, forklifts and staff buses. The Imperial company has also made considerable strides in reducing its water consumption, with a decrease from 2 921 kilolitres to 2 310 kilolitres. *“This saving is largely the result of the installation of five HVAC units, which replaced evaporative coolers that produced more than 10 000 litres of water a day,”* explains Maluleke.

The company’s waste management initiatives include the employment of a full-time on-site waste management team,

which has streamlined the collection, sorting and segregation of all waste through a centralised waste station. Waste generation has been cut from 44.01 to 26.97 tonnes. The company proudly recycles 59% of all waste generated by its operations.

When Imperial Health Sciences undertook extensions to its Cape Town premises, sustainability was prioritised, and the project was completed using environmentally responsible and resource-efficient principles in every aspect of the building's lifecycle. LED lighting and motion sensors are used throughout the facility and the roof is painted with a Thermo-Shield coating that reduces interior temperatures by as much as 45%, thereby cutting air conditioning and refrigeration costs by up to 40%. A solar powered electric fence and carbon emissions sensitive server are further energy efficient enhancements.

Imperial's dedication to "*greening*" Southern African supply chains was recognised at the 2015 Logistics Achiever Awards, where the group was presented with two "*Enviro Awards*".