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MAY 2003

Office Plants Sprout Environmental and Employee Benefits

Want a natural way to make indoor workplaces healthier, calmer, and more productive? Join the growing trend of adding interior plants to office settings.

According to **Plants at Work**, a national information campaign based in Cincinnati, OH, a number of studies verify the restorative and rejuvenating effects of interior plants.

For instance, in a recent study conducted by Dr. Virginia Lohr of Washington State University, employees in offices containing indoor plants were 12 percent more productive and less stressed than those who worked in plant-free environments.

In addition, the Associated Landscape Contractors of America, based in Herndon, VA, notes that correct selection and placement of indoor plants can lower a facility's heating and cooling costs by up to 20 percent.

Further studies show that plants can combat "Sick Building Syndrome," in which toxins from furniture, carpeting, wall coverings, and other office decor are linked to ailments ranging from upper-respiratory problems to eye irritations, allergies, colds, or viruses.

One researcher recommends that every worker have a plant on his or her desk, within a "personal breathing zone" of six to eight cubic feet around the worker. Other suggestions include innovative "tree walls" or small hedges around workspaces to replace cubicles.

Gallup Polls indicate that two thirds of the American workforce cite gardening as their favorite hobby. Perhaps this "green thumb" passion explains why humanizing workspaces with plants can help promote employee satisfaction.



Indoor plants can enhance office decor, while improving employee well-being and air quality.