

Case Study

Permadoor – Implementing ISO 14001

Background

Permadoor manufactures thermoplastic composite doors, supplying made-to-measure, low maintenance exterior entrance doors to the social housing market. Permadoor operates out of three factories in Upton-upon-Severn and Malvern, and form part of the Epwin Group.



Steve Perks, Environment Manager explained why environmental issues became a business focus for Permadoor: “our customers were asking us for our environmental policy, and some were indicating they would like us to start working towards an environmental management system”. Steve added, “also, the costs of resources such as electricity, water and disposing of waste are significant outgoings for us, and we knew we could save money by managing these carefully”.

Permadoor was also well aware of the need to manage environmental risks, such as compliance with environmental legislation, ensuring chemicals are stored and used properly and having emergency plans in case of spills, fire or floods.

Implementing ISO 14001

The first step was to carry out an initial review of the company’s site in Upton-upon-Severn. This gave all those involved a good idea of the general issues that needed to be considered. Planning took into account strategy and desired outcomes, resources, timescales, existing practice and the quality management system.

Business Eco gave support in identifying and ranking environmental aspects and impacts, gathering information on relevant environmental legislation and updating Permadoor’s environmental policy (which can be viewed online at www.permadoor.co.uk/environmental.html).

Some of the actions from the environmental management plan include:

Waste handling has been improved, and now includes paper, cardboard, wood and plastic uPVC recycling. Permadoor also invested in a new baler to obtain the best price for uPVC sheeting. Further research is underway to identify recyclers for other materials, particularly LDPE plastic sheeting.

Energy use is a significant cost to the company, so monitoring systems have been put in place and specialised energy audits arranged through the Carbon Trust. Permadoor will implement other cost-saving measures based on their advice.



Paper use has been reduced through a series of measures such as better stock control, increased use of double-sided printing and using CD-ROM or electronic methods to submit tenders where possible.

Data is continually being collected to demonstrate the cost savings, and will be monitored on an ongoing basis.



Permadoor purchased spill kits and trained staff in how to use them.

Steve said, “in addition to all these actions we were taking, it was important to involve the staff and let them know what we are trying to achieve”. General environmental awareness sessions ran for more than 30 staff to outline their responsibilities and ask for their ideas. As a result of this, four ‘Environmental Champions’ were nominated, three for the factories and one for the office. Steve sees them as crucial in supporting his role in disseminating information to staff and feeding back ideas.

Operations were assessed and environmental additions were made to existing work instructions and toolbox talk trainings sessions where relevant. Steve said, “we used many of our quality procedures and work instructions. Quality, health and safety and environment fit well together and we reduced our workload combining similar parts of the systems”.

Integrating with quality and health and safety, the scope of audits and reviews has been expanded to include environment, again saving work and

utilising the skills of experienced quality and health and safety managers, with specific environmental audits carried out where relevant.

Outcome

Permadoor is proud to announce it attained ISO 14001 in December 2006.

“I’m so pleased our hard work has paid off and we now have the certification,” said Steve, “but we can’t just stop there. Next priority will be to include our two other sites in this system. Work has begun on this already.”

Steve is already focussed on areas of the environmental management programme that need attention. “We want to work on improving our recycling rate and cutting our energy use,” he said. “This should deliver significant cost savings to the company, plus make environmental improvements including reducing our carbon emissions”.

For more information on how Business Eco can help your organisation with environmental management systems, ISO 14001 and BS 8555, please contact Sarah Wellington on 020 8915 0097 or e-mail sw@eco.uk.com.