

## ENVIRONMENTAL GREEN Q



In the 21st century, it is crucial that social, financial and environmental performance is balanced in order for companies to thrive in an increasingly demanding marketplace. This is often referred to as "the triple bottom line" and companies who understand and manage their "triple bottom line" will become more profitable and sustainable.

With that in mind, EIQA (Excellence Ireland Quality Association - The Guardians of The Q Mark) have just launched the new Green 'Q' to the marketplace, with the intent that The Q Mark for Environmental Awareness will give companies an edge when it comes to their carbon footprint. But more importantly, for businesses wanting to improve their running costs in the current economic climate, it intends to indicate where companies can reduce their environmental waste and utility costs, thereby improving their running costs and operating margins.



In order for companies to reduce their environmental impact, they need to create an Environmental Management System (EMS) which will provide the business framework through which its environmental performance will be implemented, monitored, improved and controlled.

There are many **Benefits** to companies who introduce an Environmental Management System as an effective EMS will:

Define environmental responsibilities for all staff.

Identify opportunities to reduce waste, including raw materials, utility use and waste disposal costs.  
Increase profits.

Reduce the risk of fines for non-compliance with environmental legislation.

Ensure all operations have procedures to minimise their environmental impacts.

Record environmental performance against set targets.

Provide a clear audit trail.

Attract shareholders and investors.

The aim of the Green Q is to recognise companies who are working towards a cleaner, greener, sustainable environment and the programme will be follow the familiar Q Mark framework:

- Leadership,
- Planning and commitment,
- Employee engagement,
- Performance and review
- Results

And the 8 Modules developed cover:

- The Environment and the Law
- Environmental policy and responsibilities
- Managing Energy
- Managing Waste
- Managing Water Use
- Transport
- Preventing pollution
- Environmental Management Systems and continual Improvement

The Minister for The Environment, Community and Local Government, Mr. Phil Hogan TD launched the Green Q recently and said "The reality for any business is that by protecting the environment you can actually protect your bottom line. Irish companies can maintain their competitive edge in the International marketplace whilst reducing costs relating to their carbon footprint. The Q Mark for Environmental Awareness has been designed as a best practice framework which operates a continuous improvement structure within which companies can identify, monitor and measure the true costs of utilities, transportation, waste and pollution relating to their business. It's a win: win opportunity. A small step for a business but a giant step for the environment.