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Ken Bannister, Contributing Editor If you could simultaneously operate in a "greener environment," assure increased capacity and save money, all with minimal effort, would you?

Who among us hasn't seen—*or heard of*— one or more of the recent "scary" documentaries "An Inconvenient Truth," "Crude Awakening" and "The Death of the Electric Car"? Who among us hasn't formed an opinion on global warming, the Kyoto Accord on industrial emission reductions and high energy costs? Individually or collectively, these things have heightened our awareness of serious issues affecting industry's future—
and our own.

Many maintenance and reliability professionals I have spoken with over the past two years have begun developing a social conscience in regard to energy waste and pollution matters. Realizing, though, that a concerted effort is the only way to make a real difference in their operations, more than a few of these individuals have become quite frustrated by the absence of the vision and organization needed to get started down this path.

The "boon" years of the past three decades saw corporations making huge profits, in spite of themselves and their ineffective practices. These days, things are different. Global competitiveness has turned us all into savvy consumers who look for high-quality, rock-bottom-priced goods that are manufactured by "Green" suppliers. This new mindset is forcing companies to examine their production and maintenance operations and practices more closely than they once did, with an eye toward making them more effective, more energy efficient and more environmentally friendly— *all at the same time.*

With up to 70% of all mechanical failures directly and indirectly attributable to ineffective lube practices, implementation of a world-class lubrication management program is arguably the easiest and most effective improvement program in which a company can invest. Not only is such a program immediately effective in terms of increasing equipment availability, utilization and life cycle, when set up correctly it delivers considerable positive environmental impact through its contamination control and energy management components. Furthermore, such a program takes very little—*if any*—capital outlay to implement.

Environmental ROI

From an environmental standpoint, a lubrication management program is a gold-plated change catalyst that pays off in many ways, including:

- Reduced on-site inventories of lubricants through the lubricant consolidation process
- Reorganized and cleaned-up lubricant storage areas with spill control management in place
- Improved lubricant storage, handling and transfer methods, resulting in improved contamination and filtration control that significantly reduces lubrication system and equipment leakage
- Reclamation and reuse of spilled lubricants

Energy ROI

Energy management experts now recognize effective lubrication as a major strategy in energy reduction. Using the right lubricant in the right amount greatly reduces energy losses caused by friction. For example, a simple switch to a synthetic in a screw type compressor resulted in energy savings of 7.3%. A lubrication delivery system tune-up and change to a premium lubricant on a 500- ton straight side press resulted in 17.9% energy savings.* In each case, both equipment availability and lube change-out intervals increased.

These savings are not unusual—*they're typical.* More importantly, with many corporate annual energy bills running into millions of dollars, these savings can translate into tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. In fact, many lubrication program implementations now are being funded solely on energy ROI, with uptime and availability stated as a residual benefit!

Think about it. Isn't time for you and your organization to go "Green?" *Good Luck!*

**Source: Energy Reduction Through Improved Maintenance Practices, Kenneth E. Bannister, Industrial Press, NY, 2006.*