

opportunities for savings in other areas. It will also show that the company takes its environmental responsibilities seriously.

Mann Construction implemented an EMS that has cut its operational costs and boosted its turnover – as well as reducing its carbon footprint.

Utilities costs are down and are regularly monitored. A mixed-waste recycling scheme for paper, cardboard, plastic and aluminium cans has resulted in the number of skips of waste being removed from head office being reduced from 14 in the first quarter of 2007 to 11 in the same period this year.

But the biggest saving has been fuel. This was achieved by a combination of measures. Firstly, the upgrading of the company's fleet of HGVs and vans to more modern, fuel-efficient models – which also avoids charges for entering London's Low Emission Zone.

Secondly, a variety of measures including better route planning, weekly checks on tyre pressures and for possible fuel leaks, regular maintenance and training drivers to conserve fuel were introduced.

Simple steps to take:

■ **Calculate your carbon footprint** There are a number of

different carbon calculators available online.

The primary footprint is a measure of direct emissions of carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels. The secondary footprint is a measure of the indirect carbon dioxide emissions from the whole lifecycle of products we use.

■ **Develop a phased plan for managing your carbon emissions**

Draw up a phased plan, as part of a more formal EMS, to implement the steps needed to reduce carbon emissions and even become carbon neutral. Identify where carbon emissions can be avoided and then reduced. This can be done through an energy audit.

■ **Offset carbon emissions that cannot be reduced** Once you have established your carbon footprint and cannot avoid or reduce certain aspects, purchase carbon offsets from emission reduction projects.

■ **Review your strategy annually**

If you started with just one emission source or with direct carbon footprints, you may choose to broaden your approach and look at other emissions you generate.

Catherine Golds is head of NQA, the certification body. www.nqa.com

CARBON REDUCTION

Don't delay on cutting emissions

►► It is easy to put off plans for implementing an environmental management system but there are sound financial reasons for adopting an EMS.

If you cut consumption of energy and water, use fewer raw materials and reduce waste, you will cut costs and ultimately improve the bottom line.

Just having an EMS in place will make staff more aware of the