

# Leading the Sustainability Charge

*Cascades Tissue Group is setting an example for sustainable development.*

**T**ackling sustainability and “Greening” operations is a new focus for many businesses.

However, there is much to be learned from those that have been at it since their inception. Cascades Tissue Group is one of those leaders.

So, what does leadership in sustainable development look like at Cascades Tissue Group? To start, its parent company Cascades is a pioneer when it comes to recycling and recovery programs. Second, the Tissue Group sets itself apart by having ambitious women lead the sustainability charge. Finally, the company has translated its Green actions into important stories for consumers.

## Responsible from day 1

“The environment is in the company DNA,” says Jocelyne Pinsonneault, vice president of marketing at Cascades Tissue Group.

Cascades Inc., the parent company of the Tissue Group, dates back to 1957 when the Lemaire family began recovering household and industrial waste. What started as a small family recycling business has turned into a multinational packaging and tissue paper company.

Today, consumers can choose from bathroom tissue, facial tissue, kitchen towels and napkins that are fragrance-free, made with 100 percent recycled fibers, high post-consumer content and bleached without chlorine.

## Women take on sustainability

Women have risen to the top of the Tissue Group and are demonstrating how true environmental leadership is working for Cascades. Suzanne



**Kate Rusnak**

Kate Rusnak is the communications consultant for TerraChoice Environmental Marketing.

Blanchet, president and chief executive officer, and Jocelyne Pinsonneault are two top executives at Cascades Tissue Group. They are also women who are changing the inside of the tissue-making industry.

Suzanne Blanchet joined Cascades in 1978 after having studied accounting and was named president and chief executive officer in 1997. She is the first female to become president of a paper manufacturer in North America.

Not long after Blanchet became president and CEO, Cascades Tissue Group had its first product — kitchen towels — certified by the EcoLogo Program, a third-party certification for environmentally preferable products. Cascades Tissue Group is also the first to receive the Chlorine Free Products’ Processed Chlorine Free mark for some of its products.

What makes these women so successful? One thing is sure, and it is that these women can see values changing. The shift in the market toward Greener, more sustainable products has not escaped them. Cascades has demonstrated it understands that only innovative, environmentally sound products will guarantee future success.

## “Green by Nature”

“Change your environmentality” is the tagline on Cascades Simplegreenaction.ca website. Here, visitors can find eco-tips, an eco blog and tests that score a person’s “environmentality.”

Cascades has also significantly increased its sustainability efforts on the product side, achieved in part through its 80 percent less water usage than the Canadian industry average as well as preserving almost 47 million trees each year.

North River, one of Cascades’ away-from-home offerings, is the most

complete line of tissue paper products made with recycled fibers on the market. The North River brand not only exceeds the most stringent environmental standards, but also boasts the highest number of certifications in the industry. These products are also endorsed by the Green Restaurant Association and even manufactured using clean, renewable, wind-powered electricity.

Clients of Cascades are also making moves to make their own companies greener. Algonquin College, based in Ottawa, Ontario, switched to Cascades North River Tandem line along with the North River Moka and Bath tissue based on their desire to go Green. The Ottawa Hospital also has switched to North River Moka SR11 napkins in cafeterias based on their desire to go Green.

## The future

Cascades continues to be forward-looking with products that contain not only a high percentage of recycled fibers, but a sustainable production approach that distinguishes itself from the competition.

The principles of sustainable products go beyond products at Cascades. The company is also setting a transportation policy involving carpooling, hybrid vehicles and even looking at the ways their products are transported to reduce the company’s overall carbon footprint.

As Pinsonneault reports, when looking at a product, Cascades is considering water, energy, packaging and reducing the overall size for transportation purposes.

For those companies looking to make serious changes toward sustainable development, they are wise to look to companies like Cascades Tissue Group that are incorporating ever Greener philosophies into all parts of the company. **MS**