

# Med *Clean* *Propre* *Limpio*


**No. 157**

## Pollution Prevention Case Studies

### Waste Generation Reduction

<b>Company</b>	NH Hoteles
<b>Industrial sector</b>	Short term accommodation activities ISIC Rev. 4 no. 5510 (International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities)
<b>Environmental considerations</b>	<p>The main impact of the hotel sector in terms of waste generation is directly related to the total quantity produced on a yearly basis, mainly in municipal and municipal-like waste, including large quantities of plastic.</p> <p>Recycling waste is a common practice in many hotels, and although it is without a doubt a good environmental practice, waste management options that reduce waste at the source are more suitable.</p>
<b>Background</b>	<p>Since it began operating in 1976, NH's objectives have always been guided by growth and internationalisation. In particular, since 2000 the group has integrated five hotel chains, going from 80 hotels to 405 in only seven years, offering more than 70,000 rooms in 140 cities in 20 countries.</p> <p>NH Hoteles sees the environment as a strategic interest group, given that in carrying out its activities it is continuously interacting with it. Its efforts are based on a sustainable environmental approach throughout the entire business cycle, from the construction, design and planning of the hotels to their daily operations and services that they offer the guests.</p> <p>Within the framework of their 2008-2012 Sustainability and Energy Efficiency Strategy Plan, NH Hoteles has developed several initiatives aimed at reducing the environmental impact of its activities.</p> <p>These activities have been focused on the following aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy and water consumption reduction.</li> <li>• Waste management.</li> <li>• Reduction of emissions.</li> <li>• Renewable energies.</li> </ul>
<b>Summary of actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substitution of the material the complementary toiletry bottles are made of (standard plastic) to oxo-biodegradable (OBD) plastic.</li> <li>• Reduction of the complementary toiletry bottle size by 22%.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Photos</b></p>	
<p><b>Balances</b></p>	<div style="background-color: #f08080; padding: 5px;"><b>INVESTMENT</b></div> <p>This change required no investment at all, since the cost of the new biodegradable bottles is the same as the original plastic ones.</p> <p>However, the cost of oxo-biodegradable (OBD) plastic is higher than normal plastic, so to compensate this price difference, the size of the complementary toiletry bottles was reduced by 22%.</p> <div style="background-color: #90ee90; padding: 5px;"><b>SAVINGS</b></div> <p>Before this project was carried out, NH Hoteles produced 75.000 kg of plastic per year. With the new OBD bottles, this plastic is no longer generated, since the new ones are treated as organic waste, and they decompose in two years under normal environmental conditions.</p> <p>In summary, the savings are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plastic waste: 75,000 kg.</li> <li>• CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 825 kg/year (estimated).</li> <li>• Electricity: 875 kWh/year (estimated).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conclusions</b></p>	<p>Without reducing the service provided to customers, through a subtle change in the complementary toiletry bottle sizes, NH Hoteles was able to reduce considerably the amount of plastic generated without increasing the cost.</p>

**NOTE: This case study seeks only to illustrate a pollution prevention example and should not be taken as a general recommendation.**




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