

Environmentally Preferred Purchasing Policy

Policy Overview

The goal of this policy is to encourage and increase the company's use and procurement of recycled and environmentally preferable products. By using this procurement policy the company seeks to strengthen local markets for such product, minimize material use, maximize diversion of solid waste and promote both human and environmental health. The practices outlined below will also help the company begin to address the sustainability of its supply chain and the communication of environmental practices to customers. This policy contains three main categories of items that cover most of the goods the company purchases.

General Guidelines

Preference should be given to materials containing post-consumer recycled content or that are environmentally preferable to alternatives.

Definitions:

- Post-consumer recycled content – an end product that has completed its life cycle as a consumer item and would otherwise have been disposed of. Post-consumer materials include recyclables collected in commercial and residential recycling programs, such as office paper, cardboard, plastics and metals.
- Environmentally preferable – a material or product which is durable, repairable, reusable or recyclable; has a minimum level of packaging, toxic content or chemical hazard potential; is resource or energy efficient in any or all phases of its manufacture, use and disposal; or in its use or disposal minimizes or eliminates the company's potential environmental liability.

Employees should work jointly to identify new products on the market and make information available to all company departments on recycled and environmentally preferable products and services.

Office Operations

Paper and Mailing Supplies

All printer/copy paper should contain 100% post-consumer recycled content and must contain no less than 30% post-consumer recycled content. Paper should also be processed without chlorine or chlorine derivatives. Recycled content should be given preference over color choices.

Employees of the company shall not purchase “deep-dyed or neon” (dark-colored or florescent) paper and “kraft” (brownish-orange) envelopes. These products are non-recyclable and would be counter to the company’s waste diversion goals.

All copiers and printers should be set to duplex and mass distribution of documents should be limited. Scanning and emailing documents is encouraged instead of faxing.

Office Supplies

Reused office furniture, office supplies, and other equipment are preferred over new products. Employees are encouraged to look for gently used supplies through online services or through other reuse partners.

Office supplies that have the least amount of packaging should be purchased. Bio-based materials, such as glues, should receive preference.

Products cannot be purchased that use polyvinyl chloride (PVC) such as, but not limited to, office binders, furniture, and flooring.

Products cannot be purchased that contain lead or mercury.

All wood products, such as wood furniture, should be certified through Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) to be sustainably harvested. (Other certification programs may be considered as they are developed.)

Reused toner cartridges should be used and all toner cartridges must be recycled if no longer reusable.

Equipment, Electronics and Lighting

Purchased equipment such as printers and copiers should be compatible with the use of recycled ink and toner cartridges.

All electronics should be plugged into a power strip that is able to be turned off to prevent electricity usage by idling equipment.

All electronics must have the Energy Star Label. All equipment should be shut down every night and after several hours of inactive use; exceptions are granted for staff working from home.

Only CFL or LED light bulbs should be purchased and must be used in all light fixtures whenever possible, including exit signs. Occupancy sensors should be installed in as many spaces possible, especially bathrooms, kitchen area and conference rooms.

Vehicles

When there is an option to replace the current fleet of vehicles, less-polluting alternatives to diesel and gas shall be considered such as compressed natural gas, bio-based fuels, hybrids, electric batteries, or fuel cells.

All fleet vehicles must use lead-free wheel weights, and all metal parts including, but not limited to wheel weights, spark plugs and other metal components must be recycled.

All replaced tires must be recycled.

All fluids should be the most environmentally preferable on the market, including oil and anti-freeze. All fluids must be recycled and/or properly disposed of.

Kitchen and Bath

Cleaning Supplies

All cleaning products should be bio-based and biodegradable. Purchased cleaning products should not contain the following ingredients:

- Fragrance
- Carcinogens, mutagens, or teratogens
- Petroleum-based solvents or by-products
- Acids
- Volatile organic compounds
- Organic solvents such as chlorinated or aromatic hydrocarbons
- Ozone depleting chlorinated compounds (CFC's)
- Heavy metals, such as lead, mercury, cadmium, etc...)
- Substances that can bioaccumulate
- Phosphates

Cleaning products should also have the following attributes:

- Recyclable packaging
- Recycled-content in packaging
- Reduced flammability
- Reduced packaging

Some suggested certifications/labeling schemes to examine include Green Seal, GreenBlue, Design for Environment, EcoLogo, etc.

Paper Products

All paper towels, toilet paper and tissues should contain 100% post-consumer recycled content processed without chlorine or chlorine derivatives. If this is not available, the highest post-consumer content is given preference.

Food Service Items

When serving food or drinks every effort should be made to use reusable utensils, plate and glasses. When disposable items are required, all items should be compostable and proper disposal instructions should be communicated to users.

Supply Chain and Customers

Contracts

This purchasing policy should be communicated to all vendors that the company contracts with to assure that they are utilizing acceptable products when fulfilling the contract terms.

Products and Services

The purchasing of environmentally preferable products and services should also extend to the products and services that the company produces. Employees should be encouraged to constantly evaluate and improve:

- The environmental attributes of raw materials
- The recycled content and recyclability of packing materials
- The energy consumed by the production process
- The waste created by the production process
- The delivery of services

Customers

The company should make efforts to communicate the company's environmental practices to customers as well as educate customers on why these practices are important.

All printed recycled content papers intended for outside distribution that are purchased must contain a statement of the paper's recycled content and if it has the certification of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or another sustainable forestry certification.