



Centre Region Council of Governments

Environmental Purchasing Guidelines

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1. **Purpose**

The intent of these guidelines is to encourage and increase the use of environmentally preferred products and services in the Centre Region COG whenever they perform satisfactorily and are available at a competitive price. By including environmental considerations in purchasing decisions, COG can promote practices that improve public and worker health, conserve natural resources and reward environmentally conscious manufacturers, while remaining fiscally responsible.

2. **Definitions**

A. Environmentally Preferable Products and Services: Products and services that have a lesser or reduced negative effect on the human health and the environment when compared with competing products that serve the same purpose. This comparison analysis may include raw materials acquisition, production, manufacturing, packing distribution, reuse, operation, maintenance, disposal of products and service delivery.

B. Practicable: Sufficient in performance and available at a reasonable price.

C. Competitive Price: A price lower than that offered by the competitors, or a price made more attractive because of added incentives, such as reduced life cycle costs, recycled content, longer payment terms, etc .

3. **Guidelines**

Centre Region COG will incorporate the following guiding principles into each procurement decision when practicable:

A. Incorporate the following guiding principles developed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) into each procurement decision when practicable:

- i. Environmental considerations shall become part of the normal purchasing practice, consistent with such traditional factors as product safety, price, performance and availability.
- ii. Consideration of environmental preferability should begin early in the acquisition process and be rooted in the ethic of pollution prevention, which strives to eliminate or reduce, up-front, potential risks to human health and the environment.
- iii. Recognition that a product or service is a function of multiple attributes from a life cycle perspective.
- iv. Determine environmental preferability by considering the reversibility of the environmental impacts, the difference among competing products or services, and the overriding importance of protecting human health.

- v. Maintain and update information about the environmental performance of products or services.
- B. Purchase products which contain, whenever practical, the highest percentage of post-consumer recovered material, the highest percentage of total recovered material available in the marketplace and reduce waste in the manufacture and use of products and packaging purchased by the COG.
- C. Solicit the use of recycled and other environmentally preferred products in its procurement documents as appropriate.
- D. Request our contractors and consultants to use recycled and other environmentally preferable products whenever practicable.
- E. In order to understand the cost difference in environmentally preferable products and services, request the vendor define options with the environmentally preferred product/service to compare it to a product/service without these benefits.

4. **Examples of Environmentally Preferable Products and Services**

A. Source Reduction

- i. Double-sided printing: Use duplex features on printers and copiers. Specify duplex as the default setting.
- ii. Purchase products that are durable, long lasting, reusable or refillable and avoid purchasing one-time use or disposable products.
- iii. Vendors shall be encouraged to take back and reuse pallets and other packaging materials and to utilize reusable or recyclable packaging.

B. Recycle Content and Renewable Products

- i. To the extent practicable, purchase products that meet U.S. EPA guidelines for minimum recycled content for paper, janitorial paper products, construction, landscaping, parks and recreation, transportation and vehicles.
<http://www.epa.gov/osw/consERVE/tools/cpg/products/index.htm>
- ii. Purchase remanufactured products such as toner cartridges, tires, furniture, equipment and automotive parts.
- iii. Support using recycled, reusable or reground materials when specifying asphalt, concrete, aggregate base or concrete for road construction projects
- iv. Encourage the purchase or use of previously used or salvaged wood and wood products whenever practicable. To the extent practicable, the COG will use products from certified sustainably harvested forests.

C. Energy and Water Efficient Products and Services

- i. Purchase energy-efficient equipment with the most up-to-date energy efficiency functions. This includes, but is not limited to, high efficiency space heating systems and high efficiency space cooling equipment.
- ii. Replace inefficient interior, exterior lighting, street lighting and traffic signal lights with energy-efficient equipment. Minimize exterior lighting where possible to avoid unnecessary lighting of architectural and landscape features while providing adequate illumination for safety and accessibility.
- iii. Purchase U.S. EPA Energy Star products when available.
- iv. Purchase water-saving products. This includes, but is not limited to, high-performance fixtures like toilets, low-flow faucets and aerators, and upgraded irrigation systems.

D. Building and Landscaping Products and Practices

- i. Consider Green Building practices for design, construction, and operation as described in the LEEDTM Rating System for all building and renovations undertaken by COG.
- ii. Hardscapes and landscape structures constructed of recycled content materials are encouraged. Limit the amount of impervious surfaces in the landscape. Permeable substitutes, such as permeable asphalt or pavers, are encouraged for walkways, patios and driveways.
- iii. Select plants to minimize waste by choosing species for purchase that are appropriate to the microclimate, species that can grow to their natural size in the space allotted them, and perennials rather than annuals for color. Native and drought-tolerant plants that require no or minimal watering once established are preferred.
- iv. Create swales in landscape renovations and construction performed by COG to assist in water run-off management. Develop outreach programs to instruct the public in the proper maintenance of swales.

E. Pollution Prevention Products and Practices

- i. COG should implement an integrated pest management program. To the extent practicable, manage pest problems through prevention and physical, mechanical and biological controls when COG and its contractors maintain buildings and landscapes.
- ii. No cleaning or disinfecting products (i.e. for janitorial or automotive use) shall contain ingredients that are identified by the U.S. EPA or OSHA as carcinogens, mutagens or teratogens.

- iii. When replacing vehicles, consider less-polluting alternatives to gasoline and diesel such as compressed natural gas, bio-based fuels, hybrids, electric batteries, and fuel cells, as available.

6. **Responsibilities & Review**

The Environmental Purchasing Guidelines will be given to all COG employees and Agency Directors will advocate for environmentally preferable products and services.

Nothing contained in this policy shall be construed as requiring the COG, department, purchaser, or contractor to take any action that conflicts with local, state or federal requirements.

The Office of Administration shall periodically evaluate the success of this policy's implementation and report every two years to the Public Services & Environmental Committee.