

GreenStep Cities Best Practice # 15 **- final draft for comment through May 2010 -**

❖ **Purchasing: Adopt an environmentally preferable purchasing policy.**

Required for all cities

Category: Environmental Management

Summary

Environmentally preferable purchasing (EPP) shifts city purchasing to procurement of goods and services that have a reduced effect on the natural environment and human health when compared to competing products and services that serve the same purpose. While life-cycle assessments offer the best metric for determining what is the most environmentally preferable, product and service attributes are commonly used as a proxy, and include:

- Increased energy efficiency
- Reduced toxicity
- Beneficial to indoor air quality
- Water-conserving
- Recycled-content
- Minimized waste
- Plant-based
- Locally produced

Best Practice Actions

- All cities must implement this best practice by completing Action (1).
 - Category B and C cities must also complete at least one additional Action.
- (1) Adopt a policy directing that the city purchase only:
 - a. EnergyStar certified equipment and appliances and
 - b. Paper containing at least 30% post-consumer recycled content.
 - (2) Purchase 15% of city energy requirements from renewable energy sources.
 - (3) Establish a local purchasing preference and, working with a local business association, develop a list of locally-produced products and suppliers for common purchases.
 - (4) Set a standard requiring purchase of U.S. EPA Water Sense-certified products.
 - (5) Set minimum standards for the percentage of recycled-content material in at least 5 products typically purchased by the city, such as asphalt and roadbed aggregate.
 - (6) Require printing services to be purchased from companies certified by Minnesota Great Printers or by the Sustainable Green Printing Partnership.
 - (7) Specify the use of state and national green standards/guidelines for at least 3 of the following categories of purchasing:
 - a. Events
 - b. Electronics
 - c. Wood products
 - d. Organic food
 - e. Cleaning products
 - f. Paints, coatings and adhesives
 - g. Carpets
 - h. Furniture
 - i. Paper products

Note related best practices: *Efficient City Fleets*, *New Green Buildings*, and *Renewable Energy*.

GreenStep Advisor

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Implementation Resources

- (1a) U.S. EPA-sponsored EnergyStar appliances and standards: www.energystar.gov
- (1b) Recycled-content paper is covered in the MN Pollution Control Agency's EPP web page: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/EPP>
- (2) Buy green power information: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/oea/energy/greenpower.cfm>
- (3) Local purchasing resources from the MN-based Institute for Local Self-Reliance: <http://www.newrules.org/retail/rules/local-purchasing-preferences>
- (4) U.S. EPA-sponsored WaterSense appliances and standards: <http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/index.htm>
- (5) Recycled-content specifications and resources are covered in the MN Pollution Control Agency's EPP web page: <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/EPP>
- (5) Old shingles can be used in asphalt, and glass containers collected for recycling can be used in roadbed aggregate: for specifications contact Wayne Gjerde: 651/757-2392, wayne.gjerde@state.mn.us
- (6) The Printing Industry of MN's Great Printers Environmental Initiative: <http://www.pimn.org/environment/greatprinter.htm>
- (6) The Sustainable Green Printing Partnership is a non-profit certification organization devoted to the promotion of sustainable business practices in the print and graphic communications industry: <https://www.sgppartnership.org>
- (7) Cities are able to purchase products coded with an environmentally beneficial attribute through Minnesota's Cooperative Purchasing Venture: <http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/cpv2.htm> and <http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/envir.htm>
- (7a) The web site Green Gatherings, hosted by Ramsey County, provides extensive guidance, checklists, case studies and directories in the areas of food, venue, waste and recycling, waste reduction, resource and energy use, travel and transportation, and construction and deconstruction: <http://www.MnGreenGatherings.org>
- (7b) The Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) allows purchasers to evaluate, compare and select electronic products based on their environmental attributes: <http://www.epeat.net>
- (7c) Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) product standards: <http://www.fscus.org> and <http://www.sfiprogram.org/>
- (7d) USDA Organic food standard: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/>
- (7e) Green Seal, EcoLogo, or U.S. EPA Design for the Environment cleaning product standards: <http://www.greenseal.org> <http://www.environmentalchoice.com> http://www.epa.gov/dfe/standard_for_safer_cleaning_products.pdf
- (7e) See, for example, the City of Minneapolis EPP policy for cleaning products: <http://tinyurl.com/yx78hv>
- (7f) Green Seal Environmental Standard for Recycled-Content Latex Paint: http://www.greenseal.org/newsroom/GS-43_Recycled_Content_Latex_Paint.pdf
- (7f) GreenGuard Indoor Air standard for non-recycled content paint: <http://www.greenguard.org/Default.aspx?tabid=147>
- (7g) NSF/ANSI Sustainable Carpet Standard from the Carpet and Rug Institute: <http://www.nsf.org/business/newsroom/pdf/Sustainability2.pdf>
- (7h) The Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association (BIFMA) International Furniture Sustainability Standard: <http://www.bifma.org/public/SusFurnStdArchive/Draft/2009-02-20%20e3.pdf>
- (7i) Processed Chlorine Free (PCF) paper product standards of the Chlorine Free Products Association: <http://www.chlorinefreeproducts.org/>

Benefits

- Environmental Defense Paper Calculator: <http://www.edf.org/papercalculator/>
- EPEAT Environmental Benefits Calculator: <http://www.epeat.net/FastBenefits.aspx>
- Janitorial Pollution Prevention Calculator: <http://www.ofee.gov/janitor/index.asp>
- Purchasing Impact Estimator: <http://pie.earthster.org/>
- Energy Star CFL Life Cycle Cost Calculator:
http://www.energystar.gov/ia/business/bulk_purchasing/bpsavings_calc/CalculatorCFLs.xls
- Energy Star Office Equipment Life Cycle Cost Calculator:
http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=find_a_product.showProductCategory&pcw_code=OEF
- New York's Remanufactured Toner Cartridge Measurement Tool:
http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycwasteless/html/at_agencies/measurement_tools_toner.shtml
- Massachusetts EnviroCalc (covers several products):
<http://www.mass.gov/Aosd/docs/EPP/EnviroCalc%20Main%20Page.doc>
- EPA's Recycled Content (ReCon) Tool:
http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/wycd/waste/calculators/ReCon_home.html
- The added benefits of improved worker productivity and improved public health are harder to quantify but exist and have been documented for specific EPP products.

Connection to State Policy

- Cities in Minnesota are required to use paper containing a minimum of 10% post-consumer recycled content and follow a number of other environmentally preferable printing practices listed in MN Statute 16B.122 (Environmentally Preferable Printing) at <https://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/statutes/?id=16B.122>
- Paper containing at least 30% post-consumer recycled content is a U.S. EPA guideline.
- The Next Generation Act of 2007 established Minnesota goals for increasing generation and use of renewable energy, one of which is purchasing 15% renewable energy by 2015.

www.MnGreenSteps.org