

Moving Towards Green Office Supplies

Karen Cook
Alameda County
Green Purchasing Roundtable
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This document has been edited for public posting online.

Presentation Overview

- What are green office supplies
 - Including office paper, supplies and toner
- Tips for promoting them
- Tips for getting your vendor to help
- Contracting options

Disclaimer: The information provided is based on experience and research conducted by Alameda County GSA. Any references to products, manufacturers, vendors, etc. shall not be construed as an endorsement. Agencies should exercise sound judgment in applying this information to their specific situation.



Comprehensive EPP Resource

Product Category & Products	Environmental Attributes to Consider When Purchasing	Green Standard/Guidelines	Notes/Further Information
Paper Office Supplies – Cut and Continuous Paper			
Copy paper	EPA: Minimum 30% post-consumer content (the percent of the product containing materials once used by consumers and recycled into new products) Green Seal adds: And/or free of chlorine or any derivatives as a bleaching agent (such as paper that is processed chlorine-free)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPG), www.epa.gov/epawaste/conservation/tools/cpg/products/printing.htm Green Seal's Printing & Writing Paper Standard, GS-07, www.greenseal.org/certification/standards/printing_writing_paper_gs_07.pdf	StopWaste Org's "Environmentally Preferable Paper Office Products" Fact Sheet, www.StopWaste.Org/EPP Green Seal's Choose Green Report, www.greenseal.org/resources/reports/CGR=P&W2.pdf Chlorine Free Products Association, www.chlorinefreeproducts.org
Copy paper - Colored	Minimum 30% post-consumer content	EPA's CPG, www.epa.gov/epawaste/conservation/tools/cpg/products/printing.htm	StopWaste Org's "Environmentally Preferable Paper Office Products" Fact Sheet, www.StopWaste.Org/EPP
Paper Office Supplies - Printing and Writing Paper			
Reprographic			Business paper such as bond, copy, mimeo, and duplicator.
Offset	EPA: Minimum 30% postconsumer content;	EPA's CPG, www.epa.gov/epawaste/conservation/tools/cpg/products/printing.htm	Used for book publishing, direct mail, technical documents, manuals.
Tablet	Green Seal adds: And/or free of chlorine or any derivatives as a bleaching agent (such as	Green Seal's Printing & Writing Paper	Office paper such as note pads, notebooks.

<http://stopwaste.org/docs/guidelinesforepproducts.pdf>

StopWaste.Org publishes an excellent document that summarizes recommended minimum recycled content levels and green certification standards for many common business products. These standards are taken from reputable standard setting bodies. This document is an excellent place to start when deciding what office supply products to target for your green purchasing program.

More Resources: Factsheets

- StopWaste.Org
 - www.stopwaste.org/epp
 - See factsheets on paper and non-paper office supplies, and toner cartridges
- Responsible Purchasing Network
 - www.responsiblepurchasing.org
 - Purchasing guides and webinars; membership required to access most resources

Even More Resources: Bids

- Alameda County, CA
 - <http://www.acgov.org/sustain/what/purchasing/>
- King County, WA
 - http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/procurement/Services/Environmental_Purchasing.aspx
- Portland, OR
 - <http://www.portlandonline.com/omf/index.cfm?c=37732>
- EPPnet Listserv
 - <http://www.nerc.org/eppnet/index.html>



Before You Buy

- Link purchasing to waste reduction
 - Connect duplex printing and copying to office paper purchases
- Link purchasing to reuse
 - Set up office supply reuse areas or encourage staff to restock lightly used items
 - Promote purchase of durable supplies from Alameda County Property & Salvage - (510) 667-7591
- Encourage consolidation of orders to reduce shipping impacts



As you consider greening your organizations office supply purchases, don't forget to include messages that reduce purchases overall, such as buying less or buying reusable products. Also, encouraging bulk purchasing, or consolidation of purchasing orders within a department can reduce the transportation impacts of your contract fulfillment.

Internal Green Buying Guide

Green Buying Guide

You are here: [GSA](#) » [Green Purchasing Program](#) » Green Buying Guide

Copy Paper

Before You Buy

- Reduce paper use by duplexing. Follow these [instructions](#) to make it your default when printing or copying.
- Store documents online rather than in hard copy. County networks are backed up nightly.
- Print only the copies you'll need. Share informational resources by email.

Minimum Environmental Specification

- 30% post-consumer recycled content

[Click here for more information.](#)

Did you know ?

*By purchasing 30% recycled content paper instead of virgin paper in fiscal year 2008-09, the County saved 2,870 trees and reduced greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to removing 27 vehicles from the road for a year.**

* Environmental benefit estimates were made using the [Environmental Paper Network Paper Calculator](#)

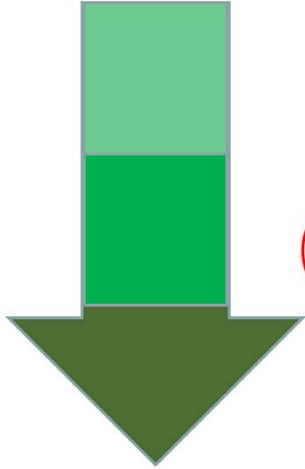
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Alameda County has developed an online internal green buying guide as a resource for our 9,000 employees.

What Are Green Office Supplies?

- Contain recycled-content
- Meet third-party standards or eco-labels
- Reusable, refillable, durable, rechargeable
- Non-toxic, low-odor, low-VOC
- Reduce energy consumption

Shades of Green




- Light Green
 - Brand owner certification
 - Below minimum PCR
- Green
 - Eco-label
 - Meets minimum standard
- Dark Green
 - Exceeds minimum standard

Recycled Content Products



- Copy Paper
- Pads / Notebooks
- Envelopes
- File Folders
- Dividers
- Storage Boxes
- Binders
- Calendars / Planners
- Pens, Pencils
- Scissors
- Paper Clips
- Post-It® Notes

EPA Recycled Content Standard



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

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Printing and Writing Papers

Printing and writing papers comprise one of the largest categories of paper and paper products. Examples include copier paper, stationery, computer printout, offset paper, and note pads. Printing and writing paper can be either coated or uncoated.

- [Recommended Recovered Materials Content Ranges](#)
- [Product Information](#)
- [Additional Links](#)

EPA's Recommended Recovered Fiber Content Levels for Uncoated Printing and Writing Papers ¹

Item	Postconsumer Fiber (%)	Recovered Fiber (%)
Reprographic Paper (e.g., mimeo and duplicator paper, high-speed copier paper, and bond paper ²)	30	30
Offset Paper (e.g., offset printing paper ² , book paper ² , and bond paper ²)	30	30
Tablet Paper (e.g., offset paper such as note pads, stationery ² , and other writing ² papers)	30	30
Forms Bond (e.g., forms, computer printout paper, and ledger ²)	30	>30
Envelope Paper		
Wove	30	30
Kraft, white, and colored (including manila)	10-20	10-20
Kraft, unbleached	10	10
Excludes custom envelopes		
Cotton Fiber Paper (e.g., cotton fiber papers, ledger ² , stationery ² and matching envelopes, and other writing ² papers)	30	30
Text & Cover Paper (e.g., cover stock, book paper ² , stationery ² and matching envelopes, and other writing ² paper)	30	30

<http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/tools/cpg/products/printing.htm>

For recycled content products, the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Comprehensive Procurement Guideline serves as the defacto standard for the minimum level of post- and pre-consumer recycled content that should be specified in products.

Eco-Labels

Single-Attribute



Multi-Attribute



Greenwashing



- Helps avoid greenwashing
- Saves time evaluating claims
- Creates market value for certifying








Eco-labels are very valuable in helping purchasers identify products that meet defined environmental standards. However, purchasers must be careful to use only meaningful labels that demonstrate true environmental achievement, and not just a marketing gimmick or the manufacturers own standard.

Eco-Label Resource



Responsible Purchasing Resources:
For Public Agencies and Institutions

Eco-Labels	
	Biodegradable Products Institute is an organization which certifies that plastic products with “biodegradable” claims will safely break down in a typical commercial composting facility. www.bpiworld.org
	Chlorine-free Products Association is a nonprofit organization that certifies chlorine-free products such as copy paper, envelopes and tissue products. www.chlorinefreeproducts.org
	EcoLogo is Canada’s environmental product certification program. It has issued standards for over 300 product categories (such as flooring, paint, electricity, cleaners, office equipment, and paper products), many of which are sold in the United States. www.ecologo.org/en/
	Electronic Products Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) is an independent program that certifies “green” electronic equipment such as computers, monitors and laptops. www.epeat.net
	ENERGY STAR is a joint program of the US Department of Energy and US Environmental Protection Agency that allows its label to be used on energy-efficient products (such as light fixtures, CFLs, LEDs, appliances and office equipment). www.energystar.gov
	E-Stewards is a program that certifies recyclers of electronic equipment that adhere to the highest standard of environmental responsibility and worker protection. The e-Stewards Standard for Responsible Recycling and Reuse of Electronic Equipment® can be found at http://e-stewards.org/certificationoverview/

<http://www.responsiblepurchasing.org/publications/>, click EPP Resource

The Responsible Purchasing Network maintains a list of valid eco-labels as a free resource on their website: <http://www.responsiblepurchasing.org/publications/>, click EPP Resource

Reusable, Rechargeable, Refillable, Remanufactured

- Pens, pencils
- Rechargeable batteries
- USB drives
- Reusable dishware
- 3-Ring binders
- Toner cartridges



These types of items reduce environmental impacts extending the life of the products and, therefore, reducing the amount of resources used.

Life Cycle Impacts of Purchases



West Coast Climate and Materials Management Forum
<http://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/ECOCOMM.NSF/climate+change/wccmmf>

This is important because, as this graphic illustrates, the impacts of a product occur throughout the entire lifecycle of that product, not just during the time we use it and dispose of it. In fact, the US EPA estimates that, when evaluated on a lifecycle basis, the greenhouse gas emissions related to the provision of goods and packaging account for 42% of all US greenhouse gas emissions.

Non-Toxic, Low-Odor, Low-VOC



- Low-odor markers
- GREENGUARD certified: flooring & furniture
- AP-certified non-toxic arts and creative supplies
- Non-vinyl 3-ring binders, sheet protectors
- Chlorine free papers:
 - Processed Chlorine Free (PCF) – Recycled paper bleached without chlorine derivative
 - Totally Chlorine Free (TCF) – Virgin paper bleached without chlorine derivative



VOC – Volatile Organic Compounds are a significant source of indoor (and outdoor) pollution. GREENGUARD is an eco-label that certifies products meet stringent VOC limits.

Rocket Air Blowers



- Just uses air
- You just need one
- \$9.95

Original source: Alicia Culver, RPN

Replace Gas Dusters



- Contains Refrigerant:
1,1-Difluoroethane =
GHG 120X > CO₂
- Some brands contain HFC 134a
1,1,1,2-Tetrafluoroethane
= GHG 1300X > CO₂
\$5-\$15/can; you need many

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Canned air dusters contain more than just air. They can contain chemicals that are potent greenhouse gasses, more powerful than carbon dioxide. An alternative is a hand-held squeezable blower which you can find by searching online for 'rocket air blower.' Key board brushes can also be helpful.

Energy Efficient



- EPEAT computer equipment
 - Specify Gold with 2009 standard
 - <http://www.epeat.net/>
- Energy Star rated equipment
 - Computer, printer, fax, copier
 - <http://www.energystar.gov/>
- “Smart” power strips
 - Cut power to non-essential electronics



It is important to note that as a leadership standard, the EPEAT standard is design to be revised every few years in order to raise the bar on environmental leadership. Agencies should evaluate the level of standard to specify based on the number of products available in the market place that meet the standard at that level. For instance, agencies should expect that a new or newly revised standard would have mostly bronze and some silver rated products available, but very few gold products. Over time, manufacturers would improve environmental performance of products to achieve the higher rating.

Toner/Ink Cartridges Terminology

- OEM – Original Equipment Manufacturer
- Remanufactured – Reuse case, replace worn parts, refill with new toner
- Starter Cartridge – low toner level
- Standard Yield – typical product on market
- High Yield – typically twice as much toner



These are definitions of terms that are used to describe cartridges

Benefits and Savings

- Remanufactured
 - Can be remanufactured 3-4 times
 - Remanufactured cartridge save 3 quarts of oil, avoids 5-9 lbs of material waste
 - Save 30-60% over OEM equivalent*
- High Yield
 - Long life means less material use, shipping
 - Save 20-30% over standard yield cartridge*

*Based on 2012 CA State Contract; savings on cost/page basis; analysis performed by RPN



Remanufactured Cartridge Quality Issues

- Ask manufacturers if they follow STMC guidelines from International Imaging Technology Council (<http://www.i-itc.org>)
 - Proper quality control testing equipment
 - Training to use standardized test methods
- Large office supply companies use cartridges from Clover Technologies, which is certified
- No local remanufacturers certified, but should use same test equipment and test methods



The term local used in bullet three refers to Alameda County

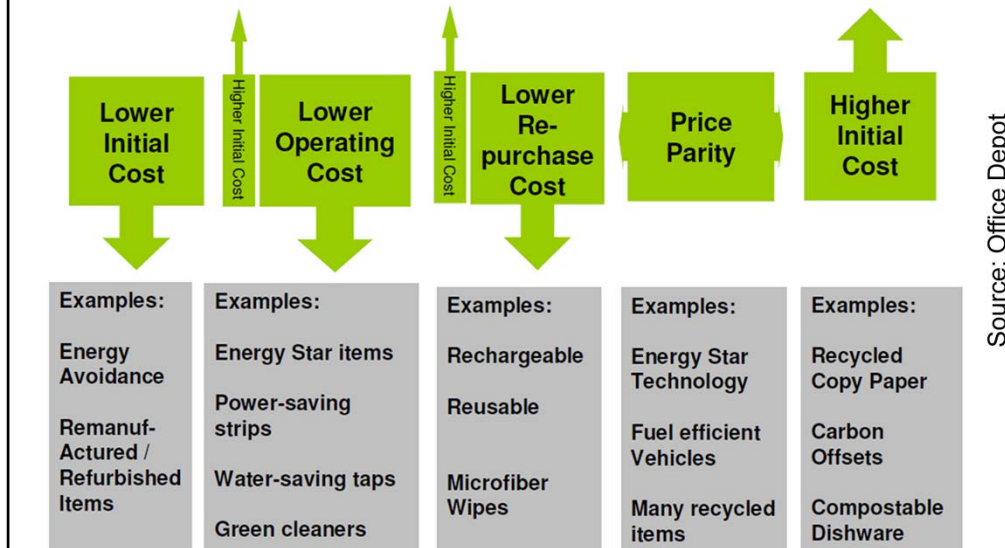
Other Considerations

- Warranties
 - All cartridges should have a one year warranty
 - For remanufactured cartridges, also ask for a warranty on printer damage caused by faulty cartridges
 - Make sure users know about the warranty – “Try it risk free!”
- Recycling/return program
 - These can be mail back or pick-up
 - OEM's may have loyalty programs
 - Aftermarket vendors may pay for cartridges



Additional specifications for remanufactured toner and ink cartridges

So there are green products... but what about the cost?



Source of this graphic is Office Depot.

Tips on Managing Cost

- Focus effort on competitive value items
 - Neutral or save on the cost continuum
 - Stick to commonly used products, i.e. 30% or 100% PCR, not 50% PCR paper
- Contract for green products
- Ask vendor to identify price competitive alternatives for you

When Products Do Cost More

- Align with your agency mandates
 - Climate Action Plan, LEED EBOM, Green Cities CA, Green Business Certification
- Make the case with environmental benefits
 - RPN maintains a wide variety of calculators:
http://www.responsiblepurchasing.org/purchasing_guides/all/calculator/
- Make sure executives can boast
 - Measure and report improvements



How Do I Get Employees to Buy Greener Products?



Getting people to buy greener products reminds me of the old adage: You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make them drink.

Evaluate What You're Currently Buying

- Ask for annual usage reports from vendor:
 - Included: product description, SKU, unit, cost/unit, quantity purchased, total spend, post-consumer recycled content of product
- Look for high volume items and seek alternatives
- Work with vendor if cost is an issue

Outreach & Education

- Get products in their hands
 - Ask vendor to do green product fair
 - Ask for or invest in demo products
- Promote use of the green catalog or green favorites list (if available)
- Set goals and report on usage
- Market greener products to employees
 - <http://www.funanddraconian.com/>



Buying Green Office Supplies

Green Buying Basics

Before you buy:

- Look for lightly used products in your department's supply reuse area. Don't have one? Start one!
- For durable office supply goods like desk organizers or chair pads, contact Property & Salvage at 510-667-7591 to see if they have any available.
- Consolidate shipping orders to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation.

What To Look For When Buying Green Office Supplies:

Recycled Content – High Post-consumer Recycled Content is Preferred



Example

Copy Paper	Dividers	Pens, Pencils
Pads / Notebooks	Storage Boxes	Scissors
Envelopes	Binders	Paper Clips
File Folders	Calendars / Planners	Post-It® Notes

Waste Reduction – Reusable, Recyclable, Refillable, Remanufactured



Example

Pens, Pencils	Toner cartridges
Rechargeable batteries	Reusable Dishware

This is an example of an information sheet Alameda County produced to highlight green office supplies.

Vendor Technology

- Have green catalog as home page and list green items first when searching
- Ensure catalog clearly marks products that are environmentally preferable
- Block products not allowed (hard block)
- Have system suggest preferable products that are equivalent in function and cost competitive (soft block)



Here are some strategies you can ask your vendor to employ on your behalf.

Alameda County Contracts

- Paper Contract: Give Something Back
 - No virgin office paper on contract
 - 30% - \$35/case, 100% - \$41/case
- Office Supplies Contract (including toner): Blaisdell's Business Products
 - Green favorites list, green catalog
 - Negotiating better pricing for green items
- Bid excerpts, contract pricing and tips on piggybacking at:
<http://www.acgov.org/sustain/what/purchasing/bids/excerpts.htm>



These contracts are both valid at the time of this presentation, but are set to expire on June 30, 2013. Alameda County expects to issue a Request for Proposal in early 2013.

Other Contracts

- US Communities- Independent Stationers
 - Uses local distributors
 - Suggests green items first, can block items
 - <http://www.uscommunities.org/isg/>
- WSCA - Office Max and Staples
 - Sophisticated website technologies available
 - <http://www.aboutwsca.org/contract.cfm/contract/w21-2007>
- State of CA
 - Office Paper and Toner contracts
 - www.dgs.ca.gov/buyinggreen



Two Final Resources

Karen Cook
Alameda County
510-208-9754
Karen.Cook@acgov.org

Delyn Kies
Consultant to StopWaste.Org
415-209-0321
delyn@kies-strategies.com

