

Jefferson County Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy

1. Purpose and Objectives

This policy shall be known as the “Jefferson County Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy.” The primary purposes of this policy are to:

- ◆ Provide direction on purchasing in Jefferson County that is environmentally sound
- ◆ Provide leadership for Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) in Jefferson County
- ◆ Set an example and pilot how to do EPP

An objective of an EPP policy is to encourage the purchase of services and products that:

- Reduce toxicity
- Conserve natural resources, materials, and energy
- Maximize recyclability and recycled content

A second objective is to employ the EPP policy in several promising areas within Jefferson County government including electronics, fleet, cleaning and custodial; paper, energy and green building.

2. Definitions

Bio-Based Products are derived from (rapidly) renewable resources, including plant-based fibers such as kenaf; extracts from oilseeds, nuts, fruits and vegetables; or wood waste.

Environmental Purchasing is incorporating environmental considerations along with traditional purchasing considerations such as price, performance and availability.

Environmentally Preferable Product has a lesser or reduced negative effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products, which serve the same purpose. (This comparison may consider raw materials acquisition, production, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, reuse, operation, maintenance, and disposal of the product. This term includes, but is not limited to, recycled products, recyclable products, low toxicity products, and reusable products.)

Post-Consumer Waste is generated by the consumer after the product has served its purpose.

Purchasing/Procurement is the process for obtaining goods and services to meet the needs of the organization.

Recyclable Product is a product that, after its intended end use, can demonstrably be diverted from the County’s solid waste stream for use as a raw material in the manufacture of another product.

Recycled Product is a product containing recycled material.

Remanufactured Products have been made from existing product materials to meet normal specifications.

Reusable Product is a product that can be used several times for an intended use before being discarded, such as a washable food or beverage container or a refillable ballpoint pen.

Toxic Compounds are chemicals in the land, air and water that affect health and safety. Often these may be regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

3. Policies

The County shall acquire its goods and services in a manner that complies with county, state, and federal laws.

Procedures and guidelines may be established as necessary to encourage the continuation of a strong Environmental Procurement Program. It is the policy of Jefferson County to:

County Department Practices

- County departments are encouraged to evaluate Environmentally Preferable Products and purchase them when possible.
- Encourage departments to include specifications for Recycled and Environmentally Preferable Products in all County contracts. The County Policy allows departments to evaluate the efficacy of a product prior to formulation of product specifications and further allows departments to specify both Environmentally Preferable Products and standard products in the same bid. Departments may also specify only Environmentally Preferable Products and select the lowest priced bidder.
- Continue and if possible expand its existing programs to purchase Environmentally Preferable Products (such as re-refined automotive oils and coolants; the use of integrated pest-management, green seal custodian supplies, etc.).

Products/Services with Criteria

- Procure Environmentally Preferable Products and services where criteria have been established by governmental or other widely recognized authorities (e.g. Energy Star, Green Seal, and EPA Eco Purchasing Guidelines).

Vendors

- Encourage suppliers and contractors to offer Environmentally Preferable Products at competitive prices.
- Encourage providers of services to consider environmental impacts of service delivery.

Staff Awareness

- Raise staff awareness on the environmental issues affecting procurement by providing relevant information and training.

4. Implementation Recommendations

4.1 Departmental Responsibility

- ◆ Overall responsibility for County purchasing is by the County Administrator (as official purchasing agent).
- ◆ Most all County departments will have a facility or departmental manager involved in leading purchasing activities for the best interests of their respective department.

Typical activities that should occur at the County department level are:

- ◆ Promote and share among County departments the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing efforts that departments are currently undertaking.
- ◆ Evaluate specifications for Environmentally Preferable Purchasing on contracts.
- ◆ Participate in training and ensure that all departments are represented in training to raise awareness of Environmentally Preferable Purchasing practices.
- ◆ Convene periodic workshops to assess program outcomes and accomplishments.

4.2 Specific Purchasing Considerations for County Departments

For illustration purposes, Jefferson County has identified several areas for which an EPP policy could be directed. Listed below are six promising areas and some potential strategies to pursue in implementing the program.

Electronics

- ◆ Purchase from companies that buy-back
- ◆ Evaluate energy usage vs. purchase price
- ◆ Continually evaluate energy and waste reduction opportunities in computers and electronics.

Fleet Considerations

- ◆ Evaluate modifications to the fleet, including: Hybrid cars, re-refined oil and other technologies as they become appropriate and feasible.
- ◆ Consider life cycle cost of operation when purchasing fleet vehicles

Cleaning Products/Custodial

- ◆ Use environmentally safe and least toxic cleaning products that are effective for the job.
- ◆ Pilot new products as appropriate.

Overall Paper Considerations

- ◆ Maximize recyclable content of paper whenever possible.

Energy Efficiency

- ◆ Encourage energy audits of all County facilities.
- ◆ Evaluate purchasing reusable energy and consider the establishment of a reasonable goal.

Green Building

- ◆ Encourage application of "Green Building" principles including LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards in construction of new County facilities.