

SEATTLE SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING POLICY

6.14 SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING (11/06/03)

6.14.1 Purpose

To encourage the purchase and use of materials, products and services that best align with the City's fiscal, environmental, social, community and performance goals.

6.14.2 Organizations Affected

All City departments and offices that make purchases of goods and services or that contract with others to make purchases.

6.14.3 Definitions¹

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

Performance: The efficacy of a product, material or service to accomplish its intended task or job

Life Cycle Assessment (LCA): The comprehensive examination of a product's environmental impacts throughout its lifetime, including new material extraction, transportation, manufacturing, use, and disposal.

Life Cycle Cost Assessment (LCCA): The comprehensive accounting of the total cost of ownership, including initial costs, energy and operational costs, longevity and efficacy of service, and disposal costs.

Recyclable Product: A product or package made from a material for which curbside or drop-off collection systems are in place for a majority of City residents or businesses, to divert from City solid waste for use as a raw material in the manufacture of another product or the reuse of the same product.

Recycled Content Product: A product containing a minimum of twenty-five percent (25%) recycled materials except in those cases where the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has adopted procurement guidelines under the Resource Conservation Recovery Act of 1976. In those cases, the minimum content of recycled material shall not be less than specified in the most current adopted issue of those guidelines.

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

¹ From SMC 3.18 or federal Executive Order

Sustainable Product: A product that achieves performance objectives while respecting the City's values and balancing: environmental stewardship, social equity, fiscal responsibility and community enhancement.

Sustainable Purchasing: Purchasing materials, products, and labor in a manner that reflects fiscal responsibility, social equity, community and environmental stewardship.

6.14.4 Policy

The City shall acquire its goods and services in a manner that complies with federal, state, City laws, and other requirements (e.g., City resolutions). The City shall purchase and use materials, products and services which are fiscally responsible, reduce resource consumption and waste, promote opportunities to lesser-advantaged segments of our community, perform adequately, and promote human health and well-being.

Environmental factors to be considered in selecting products include life cycle assessment of:²

- Pollutant releases, especially persistent bioaccumulative toxins (PBTs)
- Waste generation;
- Greenhouse gas emissions;
- Recycled content;
- Energy consumption;
- Depletion of natural resources; and
- Potential impact on human health and the environment.

Social equity factors to be considered include, but are not limited to:

- Use of local businesses
- Use of small, minority and women-owned businesses
- Ergonomic and human health impacts

Fiscal factors to be considered include but are not limited to:

- Lowest total cost
- Leveraging our buying power
- Impact on staff time and labor
- Long-term financial/market changes
- Technological advances in a rapidly changing market

Performance is the ability of the product or service to accomplish or contribute to accomplishment of a job or task.

City departments shall use, where feasible, products that perform and have the least damaging/most beneficial environmental impact, including new environmentally preferable products, reusable products, recycled content, and recycled products. Recognizing its role as a major purchaser of goods and services, the City shall seek opportunities to encourage and influence markets for environmentally preferable products through employee education; supporting pilot testing of potential new products; adopting innovative product standards, specifications, and contracts;

² Refer to chemical use policy for hazardous materials criteria.

leveraging citywide buying expertise and buying-power through programs such as Copernicus; and embarking on cooperative ventures with other jurisdictions.

6.14.5 Procedures and Responsibilities

6.14.5.1 Product Standards

The Director of the Department of Executive Administration (DEA) shall be responsible for:

- Adopting standards that specify minimum recycled content, recyclability, reusability, or other aspects of environmental preferability, consistent with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and Washington State standards.³ In no case shall these standards be less stringent than USEPA standards. In addition, DEA may adopt standards for products that have not been addressed by USEPA or Washington State;
- Encouraging pilot testing for environmentally preferable/sustainable products; and
- Consulting with the appropriate departments regarding technical and performance specifications of products in those situations where a department has specific expertise in the use of a product or the establishment of a product's performance specifications.

6.14.5.2 Specifications and Contracts

The Director of the DEA shall be responsible for:

- Revising existing procurement policies and specifications through user groups such as commodity teams to facilitate use of environmentally preferable products.
- Considering sustainability factors through user groups such as commodity teams in evaluating responsiveness of prospective bidders in its procurement of goods and services; and
- Utilizing expertise of City staff, through user-groups such as commodity teams or other means, to pilot-test environmentally preferable products and use Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) methods and tools, where appropriate, to determine total cost impacts.

The director of each City department shall promote, whenever practicable, its vendors', contractors', and consultants' use recycled-content paper of at least 35% post consumer waste on all documents submitted to the City and to use other environmentally preferable/sustainable products, as appropriate.

6.14.5.3 Education and Technical Assistance

The Directors of DEA, Seattle Public Utilities, and the Office of Sustainability and Environment (OSE) shall develop tools for disseminating information to City staff about reusable, recycled content, recyclable, and otherwise environmentally preferable/sustainable products; about vendors and City contracts for such products; and about user groups and other opportunities to test and discuss new products.

The director of each City department shall encourage:

³ Recyclability shall be determined by whether in-City collection systems are in place to divert the material from solid waste for use as a material in the manufacture of another product or the reuse of the same products (SMC 3.18.908).

- departmental use, where feasible, of environmentally preferable through training, information dissemination, development of internal procedures, and other means; and
- departmental participation in user groups, pilot testing programs for new products, and other citywide efforts established to implement this policy.

6.14.5.4 Data Collection and Performance Reporting

The Director of the DEA and OSE shall collaborate in:

- Working with other departments to collect data for performance tracking and evaluation of the City's environmentally responsible purchasing program; and
- Compiling records for the purposes of producing an annual summary of the City's environmentally responsible/sustainable purchasing actions, and for evaluating the effectiveness of these actions in reducing the environmental impacts of City procurement.

The director of each City department shall cooperate in information gathering for the purposes of tracking, reporting, and evaluating the sustainable purchasing program.

6.14.5.5 Market Enhancement

The Director of the DEA and OSE shall be responsible for:

- Seeking opportunities to cooperate with other jurisdictions to enhance markets for environmentally preferable/sustainable products, to obtain favorable prices, and to reduce waste packaging and product by combining purchases/contracting for the same or similar products; and
- Promoting the use of recycled-content products, recyclable products, and other environmentally preferable/sustainable products to potential vendors to the City by publicizing their availability.⁴

6.14.6 References

- Resolution 27828, directing Solid Waste to develop policies and practices to encourage, increase, and require recycling, waste reduction, and the purchase of recycled products.
- Resolution 28556, authorizing the Director of ESD to develop a "Recycled-content Procurement Plan."
- Resolution 29949 –implementation of Copernicus, encouraging the City to act as a regional partner in environmental protection
- Seattle Municipal Code 3.18.900 - 926 (Ordinance 116720 and 116726).

U.S. Executive Order 12873 and "*Greening the Government: A Guide to Implementing Executive Order 12873.*"

⁴ per SMC 3.18.904E.