

Rutgers Green Purchasing Policy and Guidelines

A. Goal

In accordance with the University's Purchasing Policy, Rutgers is committed to the use and purchase of environmentally and socially responsible materials and products. Departments are expected to support this policy in accordance with established guidelines and procedures contained in this Green Purchasing Policy. This document is a way in which Rutgers' procurement decisions are made using multiple factors. These procurement decisions include economic criteria as well as strong commitments towards environmental protection.

B. Assessment of Current Status and Opportunities

The Rutgers' Purchasing Department and those Administrative Units with delegated purchasing authority are responsible for the procurement of goods and services for the entire Rutgers University System.

Selected Goals:

- To develop and maintain a consistent 'cradle-to-cradle' supply chain and purchasing process which considers economic, ethical, social and environmental impacts for all contracts and purchases; where all waste should first be eliminated or avoided and where any remaining waste be considered feedstock for new product development.
- To integrate green purchasing concepts and products into architectural designs, final construction documents and into the final construction of all Rutgers buildings, renovations of property or facilities owned by Rutgers.
- To utilize environmentally responsible biodegradable solvents and citrus-based, rather than oil-based, cleaners.
- To utilize bio-based products, fuels and solvents (e.g. soy-based inks and lubricants).
- To purchase equipment and fleets which utilize alternative fuel and/or alternative environmentally responsible energy methods; target and help Rutgers develop new sources of alternative fuel that can be produced at Rutgers utilizing Rutgers waste.
- To conduct research and procure alternative energy from reliable, certified alternative energy suppliers.
- To make use of recycled paper; used paper is turned into scratch pads for distribution to departments on campus.
- To procure recycled content office supplies (folders, writing pads, etc.).
- To procure environmentally responsible and ergonomically designed furniture and furnishings including floor coverings and window treatments.
- To reuse packing material and plastic bags.
- To comply with New Jersey State recycling policies and regulations and identify, implement and record data for new categories of recycling.
- To increase recycled content offerings across all commodities.
- To recycle ink and toner cartridges.

- To reuse, return or negotiate with suppliers the reduction or elimination of all packing materials.
- To recycle wood pallets; recommend alternative pallets or develop a reuse-return program.
- To recycle fluorescent bulbs.
- To recycle all mercury-type bulbs.
- To recycle lead acid batteries.
- To ensure that proper MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheets) are identified in all contract specifications and kept on record.
- To ensure that Rutgers contract suppliers maintain and practice global standards of corporate social, ethical and environmental stewardship through the market they serve, including sub-contracted suppliers by posting the supplier's annual corporate, social, ethical and environmental reports and other supporting documentation.
- To work with suppliers to develop and implement corporate social, ethical and environmental reports for those suppliers who do not have programs in place.

C. Action Recommendations

1. Short-term

a) Adopt the following proposed Green Purchasing Policy:

It is the objective of Rutgers to support the 3 R's of waste management, namely Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle, and conserve energy and water when purchasing supplies, equipment, and services. In so doing Rutgers intends to minimize the harmful effects of their use and final disposition upon the Environment.

Rutgers is committed to actions designed to conserve and protect the environment, and will continue to implement those actions whenever possible and economically feasible. It is the responsibility of Rutgers' Purchasing Office in conjunction with all Rutgers departments to promote the development and use of environmentally friendly products and services through the following activities:

(1) Reviewing contracts, bids and specifications for goods and services to ensure that, whenever possible and economical, they are amended to provide for the expanded use of products and services that contain the maximum level of post-consumer reusable or recyclable waste / or recyclable content, without significantly affecting the intended use of the product or service.

(2) Working with the Rutgers Environmental Committee, the department responsible for consulting with all user departments to identify new environmentally friendly products and services as well as improvements/changes in industry standards that may impact the environment.

(3) Purchasing from suppliers that provide environmentally friendly products and services or suppliers that are environmentally sensitive in their daily operations.

(4) Promoting the purchase of goods and services which support the three R's where available and practical, for the day-to-day operation of Rutgers.

(5) Seeking new suppliers and encouraging existing suppliers to review the manner in which their goods are packaged.

(6) Working with suppliers in the areas of reduction and reuse of packaging materials.

(7) Using cost/benefit analysis to arrive at the correct sourcing decision; one that remains economically practical, reflects effective purchasing practices and satisfies the requirements of the user department.

(8) Making suppliers aware of Rutgers' Green Purchasing Policy. Sending a clear message that Rutgers will favor those suppliers whose products meet the environmental objectives of Rutgers.

(9) More specifically, Rutgers, through its strong commitment to environmental protection, will seek to utilize to the fullest extent possible "environmentally friendly" or "green" products which, to whatever extent possible, have the following attributes or qualities:

- (a) Durable, as opposed to single use or disposable items.
- (b) Made of recycled materials, maximizing post-consumer content.
- (c) Non-toxic or minimally toxic, preferably biodegradable.
- (d) Highly energy efficient in production and use.
- (e) Can be recycled, but if not recyclable, may be disposed of safely.
- (f) Made from raw materials obtained in an environmentally sound sustainable manner.
- (g) Manufactured in an environmentally sound, sustainable manner by companies with good environmental track records.
- (h) Cause minimal or no environmental damage during normal use or maintenance.
- (i) Shipped with minimal packaging (consistent with care of the product), preferably made of recycled and/or recyclable materials.
- (j) Produced locally or regionally (to minimize the environmental costs associated with shipping).

b) Create, adopt, and implement a Rutgers Paper Policy.

c) Evaluate purchasing of recycled materials and environmentally sound products in the Bookstore.

d) Evaluate purchasing of chemicals in the Science and Art departments and research safer, more environmentally sound means (e.g., changing mercury thermometers to alcohol).

e) Ban the purchase of all tropical hardwoods.

f) Reduce/eliminate the purchase of glass and styrofoam.

g) Identify Campus Vendors - All past vendors are on file (numbering in the thousands). Compile database of vendors used in last 18 months (CFO Office will provide).

- h) Research (and develop contracts for) the following list of products: paper, packaging, cleaning products and devices, batteries, lighting, paints, carpeting, furniture, fabrics, fixtures, photocopying, photo developing, windows, construction contracts/materials, vehicles, motor oil/tires/fuels, appliances, audiovisual equipment, printing services.
- i) Draft a purchasing specification list for departments.
- j) Use MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) to compare products.
- k) Collect and update current MSDS on products listed above.
- l) Test the more eco-friendly products with major users on campus for acceptability. Recommend starting with a few products around campus:
- (1) Pesticides.
 - (2) Paper: Research companies that provide a recycled paper for Water Mark letter purchase.
 - (3) Fertilizer.
 - (4) Ink for print shop. Evaluate soy-based ink use in print shop. Replace Rutgers green ink from oil-based to soy.
- m) Adopt the following checklist for use in Rutgers purchasing:

Checklist for Rutgers Purchasing/Environmental Committee

When purchasing, ask these supplier questions. But first, determine if the product or service is truly necessary. Purchasing will need to be balanced with issues of product performance, cost, and availability.

(1) **Waste reduction:** Is the product durable? Can it be easily and economically serviced and maintained? Is the product designed to reduce consumption and minimize waste? Is the product reusable? Is the product technically and economically recyclable in the immediate area? Do facilities and internal collection systems exist to recycle the product? Can the product be returned to the supplier at the end of its useful life? Is the product compostable and are systems in place to compost the product on or off-site? Will the product biodegrade over time into harmless elements?

(2) **Packaging:** Is the product necessary? Can it be eliminated? Is minimal packaging used? Is the product packaged in bulk? Is the packaging reusable or recyclable? Are recycled materials used to produce the packaging and at what percent post-consumer waste? Can the packaging be returned to the supplier? Is the packaging compostable?

(3) **Material source:** Are recycled materials used in the product? If so, what percentage? What percentage of post-consumer materials is used? If wood is used in the product, what is its source and how is it harvested? Is the product manufactured from tropical rainforest wood?

(4) **Energy efficiency:** Is the product energy efficient compared to competitive products? Can the product be recharged? Can the product run on renewable fuels? Does the product require less energy to manufacture than competing products?

(5) **Supplier environmental record:** Is the company producing the product in compliance with all environmental laws and regulations? What is the company's record in handling environmental and safety issues? Can the company verify all environmental claims? Does the manufacturer/supplier have a company environmental policy statement? What programs are in place/planned for promoting resource efficiency? Are printed materials available documenting these programs? Has the company conducted an environmental or waste audit? Is the product supplier equipped to bid and bill electronically? Has an environmental life-cycle analysis of the product (and its packaging) been conducted by a certified testing organization, such as Green Seal?

2. Long term

a) Do not purchase products containing or produced using chlorofluorocarbons (CFC's) or other ozone-depleting chemicals when suitable alternatives exist. This includes aerosols, refrigerators, freezers, air conditioning units, CFC-blown foam (e.g., in furniture), CFC- blown insulating materials and fire extinguishers.

b) Ensure that all wood and wood contained within the products that Rutgers purchases is from sustainably managed sources and avoid the use of tropical hardwoods unless essential, e.g., in preserving the character of listed buildings.

c) Ensure that energy efficiency is a prerequisite when purchasing all appliances including light bulbs and street light bulbs.

d) Ensure that the most water efficient appliances available are purchased.

e) Specify the use of reclaimed stone and brick and the use of secondary or recycled aggregates wherever practicable.

f) Avoid the use and specification of substances known to be deleterious or hazardous to health. If no suitable alternative exists, such substances should be used under strictly controlled conditions and subject to a full OSHA assessment.

g) Avoid the purchase and use of all pesticides and wood preservatives for which safety evaluations to current standards have not been carried out and which are known to be persistent in the environment. (Avoid in particular atrazine and simazine as total weed killers and wood preservatives and treatment chemicals containing pentachlorophenol, lindane or tributyl tin oxide.) If no suitable alternative exists, such substances should be used under strictly controlled conditions and subject to a full environmental, health and safety assessment (Rutgers can provide this assessment).

h) Purchase recycled paper for all applications where economic use of paper and quality of service is not compromised or the health and safety of employees prejudiced.

- i) Where suitable recycled paper cannot be purchased, an attempt should be made to select the most environmentally friendly alternative in terms of its production and disposal characteristics.
- j) Ensure that all photocopiers purchased or leased/rented are capable of double sided copying/printing.
- k) Avoid the use of peat as a soil conditioner, mulch and growth medium, and where ever possible attempt to purchase plants that have been raised in alternative growth media.
- l) Whenever possible purchase organic produce.
- m) Purchase phosphate free and biodegradable cleaning materials where their use will not compromise quality of service.
- n) Wherever possible, purchase equipment that can use main electricity. Where batteries are essential, ensure that low mercury and cadmium batteries or rechargeable batteries are purchased.
- o) Ensure that all petroleum-fueled vehicles purchased run on alternative fuels and are fitted with a catalytic converter. Ensure that vehicles with the best fuel efficiency for the likely operating conditions are sought.
- p) Purchase goods made from recycled and recyclable materials.
- q) Purchase goods with minimal packaging that are made from recycled and recyclable materials or which can be reused.

Fiscal Year 2006/7 Policy and Green Purchasing Goals (Recommendations)

1. Consult with environmental committee to determine where Green Purchasing may help the institution fulfill Rutgers' main environmental goals.
2. In order to decide what goals to set, it is often useful to determine what concerns or burning environmental issues Rutgers already has. Tackling an existing problem, such as waste/recycling compliance and impacts, hazardous waste issues, high energy costs, environmental violations, or occupational health problems often guarantees support at all levels.
3. In setting goals, examine available resources that can help implement actions to achieve Rutgers' goals.
4. Decide on green purchasing goals that are specific, measurable, and to be completed in a set time period, such as:
 - Increase purchase of recyclable or reusable items 30% by the next fiscal year.
 - Reduce packaging waste or total solid waste 20% in 12 months.
 - Reduce energy or water use 10% every six months for 5 years.

- Reduce purchase of products that become hazardous waste by 10% in next contract.
- Reduce purchase of mercury-containing products 80% by next year.

Implementation of Specific Goal/Pilot Project

1. Implementation:

- If goal involves replacement or focus on specific product, work with Operational Departments (e.g. Buildings and Grounds, Registrar, Dining Services, etc.) and the Environmental Committee to determine process (for instance, writing environmental specifications for a Request for Proposal.)
- Determine and publicize timeline for implementation of specific goal.
- Determine who is responsible for ensuring timeline and goals are met.
- Determine performance characteristics and items that should be used when evaluating a product. For example, [EPA's EPP Guidance to Federal agencies](#) has identified 5 guiding principles to consider when applying EPP to specific acquisitions.
- Determine educational needs to implement green purchasing project. Create a written plan for education of affected parties regarding implementation of this particular project, including who is responsible for the education. Review annotated [Chart of Educational Needs](#) or shorter [List of Educational Needs](#) to determine specific needs for this project. Review importance of [communication](#).
- Implement purchase.

2. Continual Improvement:

- Determine if measurable goal was met.
- Request feedback from affected parties.
- Review process.
- Incorporate feedback into action plan for next project or improvement of this one.
- Keep records and track progress.

3. If Goal Was Successfully Met:

- Publicize success to Rutgers and the wider community.
- Assess possibility of expansion of pilot project or determine next specific goal.
- To determine next specific project, consider introducing additional environmental considerations, raising the measurable goal, or expanding the program.
- Track and report on progress.

4. If Goal Was Not Met:

- Do not be discouraged!
- Determine causes of not meeting goal.
- Brainstorm on how to correct the shortcoming and move forward — be creative!
- Choose an interim goal or pilot to implement to get back on track.
- Move forward on new goal or pilot.

Tracking System

Tracking systems can help Rutgers reach its goals, assist in identifying and financially justifying green products and services, make it easier to measure achievement of goals, and integrate green purchasing into every day decisions. Tracking systems vary from easy and low-tech to sophisticated tracking software. Examples include:

- Manual Tracking - Purchasers can use simple notes or codes on their ledgers or in computer purchasing systems to start simplified tracking of green purchases.
- Automated tracking software where green products are automatically marked as such.
- Bankcard tracking software.
- Systems to track costs of waste segregation; waste disposal; spill clean-up; health, safety, and environmental regulatory reporting and compliance; environmental health education; and inventory obsolescence back to the responsible departments and products and services purchased by those departments.

Publicity and Celebrating Success

Rutgers' Green Purchasing Programs will need widespread support to maintain continual enthusiasm.

Use data to create easily interpreted environmental indicators for publicity:

- "Recycled paper purchases saved 455 trees and 8000 gallons of water this year."
- "Replacement of scientific research chemical reagent prevented \$3500 of hazardous waste disposal costs this quarter."
- Report on the total percentage of all purchased items having recycled content.
- Publicize reduction in garbage volume or weight over time.

Label environmentally preferable products to educate faculty, staff and students:

- "This memo printed on 100% post-consumer recycled paper. "
- "Mercury-free bulbs are installed in this classroom."
- Ask suppliers to insert green purchasing flyers and information about the product shipped inside the package or on the packing slip and/or invoice.

Develop a Rutgers University awards program for faculty, staff and students who contribute successful ideas on green purchasing projects. Make sure Rutgers rewards faculty, staff and students who contribute to continuous improvement or have solutions to problems they have pointed out, but wait until the review period for pilots to ensure that the awarded idea actually works.