

Policies of Colorado State University

University Policy



Policy Title: Environmentally and Socially Responsible Procurement	Category: Administration
Owner: Vice President for University Operations	Policy ID#: 5-6010-003
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PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to support campus sustainability at Colorado State University and to provide guidelines, information, and resources in procuring products that will minimize negative impacts on society and the environment to the greatest extent practicable. This policy will guide CSU employees who wish to purchase goods and services for CSU to finding more environmentally sound products, and may require the use of environmentally preferable products in many instances.

APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

This policy will apply to purchases of goods and services by CSU departments except as stated below. This policy must be applied in conformance with all other procurement rules and requirements. In the event that a CSU Procurement Rule, or any applicable state or federal law or regulation, conflicts with the application of this rule, then the governing Procurement Rule, law or regulation shall control.

EXEMPTIONS FROM THIS POLICY

The preference for selection of a service or product based on its "green" attributes does not extend to services or products that:

1. Do not meet the reasonably required specifications needed for the product as it will be used at CSU;
2. Meet the reasonably required specifications, but are not competitively priced in comparison to a competing product that is not as environmentally preferable. As used herein, "not competitively priced" means a difference of at least five percent (5%) more than the competing, non-ESRP product;
3. Meet required specifications and are competitively priced, but are not reasonably available at the times or in the quantities required, or otherwise cannot reasonably be selected for the needs of the University in the judgment of the responsible Purchasing Agent; or
4. Meet required specifications and are competitively priced, but are not allowed to be purchased because of a specific, bona-fide, grantor-directed purchase requirement or strict compatibility requirement.

Any exception approved by the Director of Procurement Services for non-compliant equipment that is a true sole source for meeting the bona fide, specialized needs of the customer may also be exempted.

DEFINITIONS USED IN THIS POLICY

Customer: The person placing the order for acquisition of goods, or the person on whose behalf the order is placed and who is responsible for the selection and use of the goods.

Environmentally Preferable Products (EPP): Colorado Revised Statutes §24-103-207.5 defines "Environmentally Preferable Products" as products or services that have a lesser or reduced adverse effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose. This

comparison may consider raw materials acquisition, production, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, reuse, operation, maintenance, or disposal of the product.

Environmentally and Socially Responsible Purchasing (ESRP): The purchase of products and services that minimize negative impacts on society and the environment when compared to other products and services that serve the same purpose.

Fair Trade: Trading designation and movement whose goal is to help producers in developing countries get a fair price for their products to reduce poverty, provide for the ethical treatment of workers and farmers, and promote environmentally sustainable practices.

Locally Sourced: STARS (Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System) defines as “local” those products or services sourced from local community-based producers (directly or through distributors) within a radius of 250 miles from campus. Local sourcing is included within the ESRP standards.

Preference: A 5% allowance applied to goods or services meeting EPP standards when competing directly against goods or services which do not meet EPP standards.

Post-consumer Waste (PCW): Material that has served its intended end-use and been discarded by a final consumer.

Recyclable: The ability of a material to be reused in manufacturing.

Recycle: To reprocess and reuse used material to create new products.

Recycled Products: Products manufactured with waste material that has been recovered or diverted from solid waste. Recycled material may be derived from post-

consumer waste, industrial scrap, manufacturing waste, or other waste that would otherwise have been wasted.

Reduce: Using less of products and utilizing other means of doing business when available to reduce the amount of toxicity of trash discarded.

Remanufactured: Indicates the product has already been used before but has been refurbished to use again.

Sustainability: Meeting today's needs without comprising the ability of future generations to satisfy their needs.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs): Organic chemical compounds that have significant vapor pressures, can affect the environment and human health, and are emitted as gases from certain solids or liquids. They are generally found in higher concentrations indoors than outdoors, and have been linked to hazardous health effects.

POLICY STATEMENT

Colorado State University is committed to reducing its impact on the environment and enhancing public health. Products and services that meet ESRP standards help achieve these goals should be purchased whenever practicable, so long as they meet quality and value standards.

University personnel who make purchasing decisions are expected to support and follow this policy. The university will emphasize the importance of sustainability by educating the campus community about ESRP programs and policies; training campus purchasers to apply an ESRP framework in purchasing requests and decisions; and incorporating sustainable options into the procurement process for as many areas of university operations as feasible.

POLICY PROVISIONS

1. Purchasing Preference

All purchases of goods over \$5,000 in total order value will be reviewed by a CSU Purchasing Agent to determine whether products exist that are environmentally preferable to competing products of substantially the same quality, specifications and cost. The Purchasing Agent may consider total life-cycle cost as well as the direct cost of acquisition. If the order is within the range of Purchasing Agent discretion, and the Purchasing Agent determines that an ESRP product is available to meet the requirements of the order and is competitively priced, that product shall be selected over a competing product that does not meet ESRP standards unless the ordering department establishes good cause for not selecting that product (as determined by the Purchasing Agent). If the ordering department and the Purchasing Agent do not agree on this determination, the matter may be referred to the customer's Department Head and the Director of Purchasing for resolution. Purchases of Fair Trade certified products are also encouraged, but are not subject to the preference.

2. Small Dollar Purchases

All University customers should make an effort to make their small dollar purchases "green". Seek out products and services that meet "green" purchasing guidelines when buying with a PCARD or an APO, and partner with a Purchasing Agent to help locate and assess these products and services.

3. Writing "Green" Specifications

The Purchasing Department will work with University staff and students to incorporate environmentally beneficial specifications in competitive solicitations by conducting competitive procurements that include environmental requirements. Colorado law (C.R.S. §24-103-207.5) allows a five percent preference for the purchase

of environmentally preferable products. In some cases, the preference may exceed five percent if a cost of ownership life cycle analysis establishes that long term savings will result.

4. Green Purchasing Guidelines and Resources

The Environmental Protection Agency has issued five guiding principles of EPP to help institutions incorporate green purchasing into their daily practices. These principles serve as an easy-to-follow baseline for virtually any type of purchasing. They are:

- a. Include environmental considerations as part of the normal purchasing process.
- b. Emphasize pollution prevention early in the purchasing process.
- c. Examine multiple environmental attributes throughout a product's or service's life cycle.
- d. Compare relevant environmental impacts when selecting products or services.
- e. Collect and base purchasing decisions on accurate and meaningful information about environmental preference.
- f. Selecting Products and Services for ESRP

There are a number of targeted areas where ESRP can be an effective tool in reducing the university's overall environmental footprint. These targeted areas fall into two subcategories: products and services.

Examples of products for which ESRP standards should be used:

- Building construction and maintenance
- Electricity
- Furniture
- Landscaping
- Pest management

- Vehicle fleets
- Cafeteria supplies
- Office supplies
- Cleaning products
- Paint
- Computers
- Printing
- Copiers
- Copy paper products
- Custodial paper products

Examples of contracted services subject for which ERP standards may be used:

- Vending and concessions
- Automotive waste disposal
- Campus mailing list purchases
- Food service supplies
- Construction and remodeling

Before buying any product or service, a number of questions should be considered:

- Can the need be met in another way that uses less resources, as to both funds and materials?
- Is a suitable product or service available elsewhere in the university?
- Can the requirement be met by renting or sharing rather than purchasing?
- Is the quantity requested essential?
- Can the product serve any useful purpose after its initial use?
- Remember that the best way to help the environment is to minimize consumption.
- If it is essential to purchase, it is important when choosing products or services to consider whether alternatives are available which are less environmentally and

socially damaging.

- Consider all the phases of a product's life cycle when determining its cost and environmental impact. Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) is used to assess the environmental performance of a product from cradle to grave (i.e. raw material extraction, production, transportation, product use, maintenance, product disposal).
- Assess the overall environmental integrity of suppliers by looking at their policies and practices.
- Check the eco-labeling of the product (see below).
- Is there a locally sourced product available?
- Is there a Fair Trade certified product available?

Examples of criteria to consider when determining potential impacts of goods and services include:

- Fitness for the intended purpose and value for the money
- Energy and resource efficiency
- Minimum use of virgin materials
- Maximum use of post-consumer materials

6. Best Practices and Procurement Strategies

The University will incorporate effective end-of-life recycling programs into each commodity for which it is feasible, and will work with its suppliers to establish reuse or recycling "take-backs" at no extra cost to the University, in compliance with accepted environmental standards and regulations.

The University will work towards increasing the procurement of electronics with certain environmental attributes (i.e. reduced or no toxic constituents, recycled-content, designed for recycling, reduced materials use, energy efficient, extended product life/upgradeable, remanufactured, etc.). The Purchasing Manual will be

updated from time to time to provide references to current, meaningful standards and guidelines for certain product categories (for example, [Energy Star®](#) rating, [Electronic Products Environmental Assessment Tool \[EPEAT\]](#) score).

Suppliers will be required to deliver the items to the University with energy efficiency and conservation features enabled (i.e. sleep mode, duplex printing, etc.).

Refurbishing services may be used in place of new purchases of computer upgrades or electronic equipment.

Customers and Purchasing Agents will also consider additional factors for specific attributes and/or commodities, including those listed below (further details may be found in the [Procurement Manual](#)):

- Environmentally responsible packaging
- Food Services
- Furniture
- Laboratory and medical supplies
- Maintenance, Repair and Operations
- Products and services requiring the use of water
- Meetings, Conferences, Hotels and Lodging Properties
- Office Supplies
- Paper and Forest Products
- Supply Chain Environmental Responsibility
- Surplus Property
- Vending and Concessions

7. Evaluating Environmental Claims

Customers should become familiar with third party certifiers or “ecolabels” such as LEED™, Energy Star®, GREENGUARD® Green Seal™, Forest Stewardship Council®, USDA Organic, etc. Look for “Ecolabels” when selecting products. For example, when buying office equipment consider items that carry the Energy Star® rating. Various State of Colorado and University price agreements offer products with the Energy Star® rating as well as other 3rd party certifications or “ecolabels”.

Suppliers citing environmentally preferred product claims shall provide proper certification or detailed information on environmental benefits, durability, and recyclable properties.

There are three types of “ecolabels” commonly used to identify ERP products.

- Type I: Seal of approval which looks at many attributes of the product. Examples: Green Seal™, Environmental Choice, Scientific Certification Systems, or Electronic Products Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT).
- Type II: Self-declared and only looks at one attribute of the product. Examples: Energy Star® only looks at the energy consumption of the product and GreenGuard® only looks at the emissions released by products into the office environment.
- Type III: Report card style. Example: Nutrition facts on food and drinks.

As these ecolabels and certifications change over time, consult the Purchasing Manual for further information.

8. Paper and Forest Products

Office paper and bond paper typically used in copiers and computer printers is a large consumption item for the University with millions of sheets consumed each year. All multi-use office paper purchased by the University shall contain at least 30% post-

consumer waste content. Paper procured must be certified to meet sustainability standards of one or more of the following: Forest Stewardship Council, Chlorine Free Products Association, Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

All paper and forest products must not originate in tropical rainforests.

For uncut paper uses, including but not limited to janitorial supplies, the University will adopt a standard of 100% PCW recycled content paper.

The University will work towards increasing the procurement of paper and forest products with certain environmental attributes (i.e. post-consumer recycled content, processed chlorine-free, recyclable, soy-based or agri-based inks, etc.).

The University will also work towards printing all University publications on at least 30% PCW and meet sustainability standards of one or more of the following; Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Chlorine Free Products Association, Sustainable Forestry Initiative.

For products and services requiring the use of water, the University will give preference to technologies that ensure the efficient use of water resources.

9. Supply Chain Responsibility

The University will encourage suppliers to demonstrate environmental stewardship through their Environmental Management Programs and to offer, where practicable, locally sourced and/or Fair Trade certified products.

REFERENCES

Consumer Reports sponsored website with “ecolabel” logos: www.greenerchoices.org

COMPLIANCE

An authorized CSU Purchasing agent may require vendor selection in accordance with this policy. Unauthorized purchases are subject to the CSU System Fiscal Rules, CSU Financial Policies and applicable procedures.

FORMS AND TOOLS

The [Office of Procurement Services](#) will provide further information, procedures, forms and tools in the [Colorado State University Procurement Rules](#).

APPROVALS

APPROVED:

By: Anthony A. Frank, President, December 13, 2012

Rev. 2.0 By: Amy L. Parsons, June 22, 2015