

Green Purchasing Policy

WPI recognizes that the products that the Institute purchases can profoundly affect the environment through their use and ultimate disposal. Purchased services may also have substantial environmental impact. The community is strongly encouraged to take a pro-active position in recognizing and exploring opportunities to procure “environmentally friendly” materials/equipment. It is the intent of WPI to integrate environmental considerations into acquisition decisions, while maintaining cost and value standards.

The intent of this policy is to reduce the adverse environmental impact of our purchased products and services. By including environmental considerations in our purchasing decisions, along with concerns about price, performance, and availability, we will remain fiscally responsible while promoting practices that do not harm human health, are less polluting, that minimize waste, maximize use of bio-based or recycled materials, conserve energy and water, and reduce the consumption or disposal of hazardous materials.

Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted as requiring a buyer or contractor to procure products that do not perform well for their intended use or are not available at a reasonable price or in a reasonable period of time.

WPI Faculty and Staff can contribute to improving the environment by:

- Consolidating orders
- Make use of electronic rather than paper catalogs
- Buy items which contain recycled material
- Choose renewable resources
- Opt for the non-hazardous alternative
- Look for the most energy efficient model
- Buy locally
- Buy only what is need

When determining whether a product is environmentally preferable, the following attributes should be considered:

- Durable, not single use or disposable
- Made of recycled materials
- Biodegradable
- Recyclable or capable of being safely disposed
- Made from raw materials obtained in an environmentally sound, sustainable manner
- Produced by companies with good environmental track records
- Cause minimal environmental damage during normal use or maintenance
- Carcinogen-free
- Compostable
- Energy efficient
- Heavy metal free (e.g., no lead, mercury, cadmium)
- Low-toxicity
- Made from rapidly renewable materials
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- Reduced packaging
- Resource efficiency
- Upgradeable
- Water efficient

Implementation

To assist in the implementation of this policy, the eProcurement (STARS) system will be enhanced to the extent possible to highlight desirable items (such as via distinctive symbol) and to facilitate sustainable practices such as consolidation of orders. WPI's suppliers will be encouraged to utilize more sustainable practices, and suppliers with desirable practices will be highlighted. Where feasible, a measurement and reporting system will be implemented to track progress.