

Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines

Mohawk College is committed to reducing the environmental impacts of College operations, including activities related to procurement. The purpose of this document is to provide Mohawk College employees with tangible guidelines which will assist in making sustainable purchasing choices.

Mohawk College considers environmental sustainability, opportunities to support local talent, accessibility, equity, diversity and inclusivity in all of the work we do, including external partnerships.

How to Use This Document

This document is intended to be used as a guide to assist Mohawk College employees in making sustainable choices when purchasing goods and services across several categories. Refer to the Table of Contents on page 2 to navigate to purchasing categories.

These guidelines are not a matter of policy, but rather recommendations designed to direct employees towards best practices and third-party verified certifications which indicate products and services have an environmentally and/or socially responsible supply chain, manufacturing process, or established disposal methodology.

Across each category, minimum and preferred purchasing guidelines are specified. In order for a purchase to be considered sustainable, the minimum purchasing standards must be met. When financially feasible, preference is given to the highest achievable level of any given certification (i.e. [EPEAT](#) Gold rated electronics preferred over [EPEAT](#) Silver products).

As a reminder, all Mohawk College purchasing activities must comply with the [Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive](#). Before purchasing goods or services, College employees should consult the [Procurement Guidelines for Publicly Funded Organizations in Ontario](#).

This is a living document. In order to help you make an educated decision, all certifications link to information pages. If you notice any links which have broken, or if you know of any certifications which should be added to this guide, please email sustainability@mohawkcollege.ca

Contents

Office Products (Copy Paper, and Other Supplies)..... 3

Electronic and Information Technology (IT) Devices..... 5

Catering (Food and Serviceware)..... 6

Textiles (Garments and Linens)..... 9

Indoor Furniture 11

Cleaning and Chemically Intensive Products 13

Other Preferred Purchasing Practices..... 14

 Professional Service Providers 14

 Transportation..... 14

 Delivery 14

 Waste 15

Office Products (Copy Paper, and Other Supplies)

Purchasing environmentally-friendly office products is an excellent way to embed sustainability into everyday operations. Office products include but are not limited to: copy paper, paper-based supplies (sticky notes, folders), writing utensils, small-scale electronics, batteries, etc.

Preferred Standards: Paper Products

- Preference for [Forestry Stewardship Council \(FSC\)](#) paper products with a minimum of 30% recycled content
- If FSC paper products are not available, preference is given to [Sustainable Forestry Initiative \(SFI\)](#) products
- Preference towards paper-based products which are [Processed Chlorine Free \(PCF\)](#)
- Preference towards products which are shipping in recyclable packaging (i.e. paper, cardboard)

Preferred Standards: Non-paper Products

- Preference for non-paper office supplies which contain post-consumer materials or recycled content
- Preference towards non-paper products which are [Green Seal](#) or [EcoLogo](#) certified
- Preference for electronic office supplies which utilize integrated battery packs (rechargeable). If this is not possible, use of rechargeable batteries is preferred over single-use batteries.
- Preference towards products which are shipped in recyclable packaging (i.e. paper wrapping, cardboard packing peanuts)













Avoid

- Avoid products which are not [FSC](#) or [SFI](#) certified
- "Virgin" paper products, which lack any recycled content
- Avoid bleached paper products whenever possible
- Avoid, whenever possible, non-paper products which do not contain post-consumer recycled materials
- Avoid products which are shipped wrapped in single-use plastic wherever possible

Note: Consider participating in the [Staples Recycling Program](#) which allows participants to drop off used writing utensils at Staples locations.

Mohawk College
Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines

Table 1 Preferred Certifications - Office Products

Certification	Logo	Minimum Purchase Standards	Preferred Purchase Standards
Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) - Chain of Custody		<p>At minimum FSC, SFI certifications.</p> <p>Inclusion of recycled or post-consumer content</p> <p>Purchase rechargeable batteries</p>	<p>Preferred FSC, SFI, Processed Chlorine Free (PCF).</p> <p>Minimum 30% recycled content in paper products</p> <p>Preference for post consumer recycled content in non-paper products</p> <p>Green Seal or equivalent for non-paper products</p> <p>Preference for products which have integrated battery packs (rechargeable)</p>
Sustainable Forestry Initiatives (SFI)			
Processed Chlorine Free (PCF)			
Post Consumer Recycled Content	   		
Green Seal GS-07			
Rechargeable Devices and Batteries	NA		
Post Consumer Recycled Content	   		

Electronic and Information Technology (IT) Devices

Electronic devices contribute to campus energy demand. It is important to purchase efficient electronic devices whenever possible.



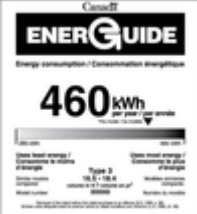
Preferred Standards

- [ENERGY STAR](#) rated whenever possible
- [Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool \(EPEAT\)](#) certified whenever possible. Strong preference towards [EPEAT](#) Gold
- Rechargeable products, or utilize rechargeable batteries whenever possible

Avoid

- Products which are not [ENERGY STAR](#) or [EPEAT](#) certified
- Purchase of single-use batteries

Table 2 Preferred Certifications - Electronic and IT Equipment

Certification	Logo	Minimum Purchase Standards	Preferred Purchase Standards
ENERGY STAR			
EPEAT		ENERGY STAR EPEAT Bronze (if applicable)	ENERGY STAR EPEAT Gold EnergyGuide certified (for appliances)
EnergyGuide			

Catering (Food and Serveware)

When planning events, conferences, or lunches - offering environmentally friendly foods, packaging, and serveware is a tangible way of showcasing Mohawk College's commitment to sustainability.

Please note: catering guidelines apply to services rendered for off-campus events. For on-campus catering, please inquire about reusable and/or compostable serveware options with Chartwells.

Preferred Standards: Packaging and Serveware

- Preference towards reusable serveware and utensils whenever possible
- If disposable packaging, serveware, or cups are required, preference is given to certified products which indicate the product is **compostable** within municipal facilities.
 - [Biodegradable Product Institute \(BPI\)](#) - Certified Compostable
 - [OK Compostable](#)
 - [Green Seal \(GS-35\)](#)
 - [EcoLogo](#)
- Preference towards [FSC](#) certified paper products (plates, napkins, etc.)

Preferred Standards: Food and Food Service Providers

- Preference towards locally sourced and/or organic foods whenever possible
- Preference towards providers or products which are [Fair Trade Certified](#)
- Preference towards Food Service Providers/Caterers which can offer reusable and certified compostable serveware
- Preference towards food items or providers which ethical harvest certifications including but not limited to; [Marine Stewardship Council \(MSC\)](#), [Leaders in Environmentally Accountable Foodservice \(LEAF\)](#), [Local Food Plus \(LFP\) Certified](#), [Fairtrade](#), [Dolphin Safe/Dolphin Friendly](#), [Canada Organic](#), [Certified Naturally Grown](#), [Certified Green Restaurant](#).

Avoid

i) Packaging and Serveware

- Single-use plastic cutlery, cups, plates and other serveware
- Paper coffee cups and plates that are not **certified compostable**
 - Often, paper serveware has a layer of plastic embedded within the product which makes it non-recyclable

- **Biodegradable Plastics:** Biodegradable is an unregulated term which simply means the material “degrades” in the presence of oxygen. Biodegradable plastics are usually made from a mixture of cornstarch, and other products which may not be compostable. As a rule of thumb, dispose of these products in landfill (garbage), not compost bins.

ii) Food and Food Service Providers










- When purchasing catering for off-campus events, avoid providers who cannot offer reusable serviceware, compostable items, or are unwilling to reduce single-use plastic in catering activities.

Table 3 Preferred Certifications - Compostable Serviceware

Certification	Logo	Minimum Purchase Standard	Preferred Purchase Standard
Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) - Certified Compostable	 	At minimum, avoid single-use plastic	Preference for reusable serviceware. Preference for certified compostable disposable serviceware Preference for FSC Certified paper products
Green Seal (GS-35)			
OK Compostable	 <small>Compostable AS 4736 ABAX 9999</small>  <small>Home Compostable AS 5810 ABAX 9999</small>		
EcoLogo	 		

Mohawk College
Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines

Table 4 Preferred Certifications - Food and Food Services

Certification	Logo	Minimum Purchase Standard	Preferred Purchase Standard
Canada Organic		Organic and local whenever possible. Select vendors which utilize reusable and compostable serviceware	Organic, Local and/or non-GMO food options Food items that carry one or more certifications Food service provider that is LEAF certified or equivalent
Certified Naturally Grown			
Non-GMO (Genetically Modified Organism)			
OceanWise and/or Dolphin Safe			
Rainforest Alliance Certified			
Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)			
Fairtrade			
Local Food Plus (LFP)			
Leaders in Environmentally Accountable Foodservice (LEAF)			

Textiles (Garments and Linens)

Clothing, linen and textiles require a large amount of resources to manufacture, and so can carry large environmental and carbon footprints. Moreover, inexpensive textile products may have an unethical supply chain. When purchasing garments, textiles and linens consider the following certifications which indicate products have a certified environmental and socially-responsible supply chain.

Preferred Standards










- Preference for textiles which contain post-consumer recycled content
- Preference for cotton-based textiles to be certified organic
- Preference for products which carry a certification indicating a socially and/or environmentally responsible supply chain including but not limited to:
 - [Cradle-to-Cradle](#)
 - [Fairtrade](#)
 - [Better Cotton Initiative](#)
 - [BlueSign](#)
 - [Certified B Corporation](#)

Avoid

- Non-certified textiles
- Materials made of “virgin” plastics (no post-consumer recycled content)

Mohawk College
Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines

Table 5 Preferred Certifications - Textiles

Certification	Logo	Minimum Purchase Standard	Preferred Purchase Standard
Better Cotton Initiative		Textiles have at least 1 certification and/or post-consumer recycled content	Cotton products are certified organic Garments carry at least one socially-responsible certification (i.e. GoodWeave) All products contain post-consumer recycled content
Bluesign			
Cradle to Cradle			
Fairtrade			
Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS)			
OE-100	 <small>This product has been given the OE-100 Standard, which guarantees that it is made of 100% organic materials that have not undergone chemical treatment or manufactured in ways to endanger the environment and local communities.</small>		
B Corporation			
GoodWeave			
Standard 100 by Oeko-Tex	 <small>CONFIDENCE IN TEXTILES Tested for harmful substances according to Oeko-Tex Standard 100 + Oeko-Tex Standard 1000 Test-No. 000000 TESTEX Zürich</small>		

Indoor Furniture

When purchasing indoor furniture, preference should be given to items which carry certifications indicating environmentally and socially responsible supply chains, products which do not contain volatile compounds which negatively impact indoor air quality, and products which have an end-of-life disposal plan.

Preferred Standards








- Preference towards furniture which is [Cradle-2-Cradle \(C2C\)](#) certified
 - Preference for products which have a manufacturer buy-back or recycling program
- Preference towards furniture holding indoor air quality certifications [GreenGuard Gold](#), [SCS Indoor Advantage Gold](#)
- Preference towards [BIFMA LEVEL Gold Certified](#) furniture - indicating environmentally and socially responsible manufacturing practices
- For furniture which contains wood, preference towards [FSC](#) certified products
- For furniture which contains fabric or textiles, preference towards certifications including but not limited to:
 - [NSF/ANSI 336](#): Gold or higher
 - [Standard 100 by Oeko-Tex](#)
 - Or equivalent certification
- Preference for items manufactured with post-consumer recycled content

Avoid

- Furniture made of “virgin” materials
- Furniture which does not carry an indoor air quality related certification
- Products which are not certified [Cradle-2-Cradle](#)

Mohawk College
Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines

Table 6 Preferred Certifications - Indoor Furniture

Certification	Logo	Minimum Purchase Standard	Preferred Purchase Standard
GreenGuard			
SCS Indoor Advantage			
BIFMA LEVEL			Cradle-to-Cradle SCS Indoor Advantage Gold
Cradle to Cradle (C2C)		SCS Indoor Advantage Gold GreenGuard Gold	GreenGuard Gold or higher BIFMA LEVEL 2 or higher FSC Certified (if containing wood)
Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC)		Contains post-consumer recycled content	NSF/ANSI or Standard 100 Certified (if containing textiles)
NSF/ANSI Standard 336			Contains post-consumer recycled content
Standard 100 by Oeko-Tex			

Cleaning and Chemically Intensive Products

Chemically intensive products, such as cleaning products, can carry significant environmental impact once disposed of. As such, Mohawk College has a stated preference for environmentally-friendly cleaning products.




Preferred Standards

- Preference towards products which hold a green cleaning certification such as [Green Seal](#), [EcoLogo](#) or equivalent
- Preference towards janitorial paper products which are [FSC Certified](#)

Avoid

- Products which do not carry a green cleaning certification
- Single-use wipes, these wipes contain plastic and must be placed in the landfill (garbage) bin

Table 7 Preferred Certifications - Cleaning and Chemically Intensive Products

Certification	Logo	Minimum Purchase Standard	Preferred Purchase Standard
Green Seal		Avoid single-use cleaning items (wipes, etc)	Janitorial cleaning products Green Seal , EcoLogo or equivalent whenever possible FSC Certified paper products Reusable wipes and cloths
EcoLogo			
Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC)			

Other Preferred Purchasing Practices

Please review the suggested sustainable practices across the categories below:

Professional Service Providers

Whenever possible and financially feasible, Mohawk College suggests procuring the services of businesses which are:

- [Registered B Corporations](#)
- Locally owned and operated
- Owned and/or operated by racialized persons/persons of colour, women, Indigenous People of North America, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ2S+ persons, and other groups who may be underrepresented

Transportation

Choose low-carbon methods of transportation whenever possible and financially feasible:

- Preference toward low-carbon methods of group transportation including but not limited to;
 - Carpooling whenever possible
 - Utilizing public transit
 - Utilizing rail whenever possible
 - Offering chartered transportation to common destinations (ie. shuttle for guests from College to conference/event/venue)
- Preference toward low-carbon, or hybrid-electric options when utilizing car-sharing services ([ZipCar](#)) or rental services

Delivery

Each delivery to campus generates carbon emission, whenever possible and financially feasible:

- Preference towards low-carbon delivery options.
 - If possible, purchase from local vendors to reduce distance travelled by the product
 - If possible, purchase Canadian-made products
 - If possible, bundle deliveries together. Avoid multiple single-item deliveries from the same vendor

Waste

When purchasing products, special consideration should be given to the packaging in which products arrive in. Consider the best practices below:

- Request zero-plastic packaging from vendors (i.e. avoid plastic film, Styrofoam packing peanuts etc).
- Request recyclable packaging from vendors
- Inquire if products or packaging have an end-of-life disposal pathway (i.e. manufacturer material reclamations program)
- Consider participating in the [Staples Recycling Program](#) which allows participants to drop off used writing utensils at Staples locations.