

Sustainable Procurement Guidelines for the University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Objective

To set guidelines for the procurement of products and services that support the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's (the University) commitment to sustainability.

Goal

Minimize the environmental and social impacts of goods and services procured by the University, through its entire life cycle. This includes long-term operations, maintenance, and disposal considerations for all materials, equipment, and other purchases made with University funds.

Applicability

The purpose of this document is to support sustainability at the University and to provide guidelines for procuring products that will minimize negative impacts on society and the environment to the greatest extent practicable. All University departments, agency organizations, and all contracted and sub-contracted services shall adhere to these guidelines. *The requirements herein shall be written into all Requests for Proposals, contracts, sponsorship agreements, and strategic alliance agreements that pertain to procurement of products or services. They shall also be applied when making departmental, event, or other purchases that do not use bids, RFPs, contracts, etc.*

Measurement

Each year, purchases in major categories will be analyzed by the Office of Sustainability to track the University's "green spend" ratios. This is the proportion of total dollars spent in a category compared to those spent on products and services that meet the sustainability standards described in this guide. This metric is used to measure progress towards the University's goals and report performance through the comprehensive sustainability assessment tool, [STARS](#), managed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

Not following these guidelines may diminish the University's sustainability performance and standings in international sustainability ratings.

Background

Sustainability Policy

The Sustainable Procurement Guidelines are meant to guide the University and its employees in making environmentally conscious decisions when purchasing materials across campus.

From the University of Louisiana at Lafayette Sustainability Policy regarding purchasing: The University recognizes the key opportunity to exercise environmental responsibility through purchasing decisions and acknowledges that environmentally responsible purchasing, as a large institution, can help to create and sustain markets for environmentally responsible products. The University is committed to the goal of balancing environmentally and fiscally responsible purchasing choices considering life cycle costs, source material and disposal issues, long-term implications, and the environmental impacts of its purchasing

policies. Language will be included in University procurement documents and bidding proposals that encourage environmentally responsible materials and operations from the seller. Whenever feasible, an environmental sustainability factor will be considered when scoring such proposals.

Sustainability Strategic Plan

Released in 2018, the Sustainability Strategic Plan addresses purchasing as a part of Materials Management and notes two objectives:

1. Consider the environmental and social impacts of goods and services, and long-term operations and maintenance costs along with the initial cost in decision-making.
2. Become a Zero Waste University by managing our resources more effectively – from initial planning and purchasing to disposal.

Why Sustainable Procurement?

Environmentally preferable purchasing impacts other areas of sustainable practice outlined in the Sustainability Strategic Plan. Therefore, the University will maximize its procurement of environmentally preferable products and services.

The University will give preference to environmentally superior products whose quality, function, and cost are in standing with the expectations of the college. Products will be chosen based on efficient use of energy, natural resources, and potential for safe, non-hazardous disposal.

Buying with a preference for the environment optimizes the use of natural resources and effectively manages waste in the supply chain, life cycle, and delivery process of goods while helping protect human health and the environment. Following sustainable procurement guidelines has the following benefits:

- Recycled content promotes markets for recycling
- Encourages environmentally positive practices
- Prevents pollution
- Minimizes waste
- Reduces energy and water use
- Lower toxicity
- Cost savings

Categories: This guide contains specific direction for procurement divided into eight (8) different categories:

1. Chemically intensive products and services ([jump to guidelines](#))
2. Buildings ([jump to guidelines](#))
3. Consumable office products ([jump to guidelines](#))
4. Furniture and furnishings ([jump to guidelines](#))
5. Information technology (IT) and equipment ([jump to guidelines](#))
6. Food service providers ([jump to guidelines](#))
7. Garments and linens ([jump to guidelines](#))
8. Transportation and fuels ([jump to guidelines](#))

GUIDELINES

General

1. Preference shall be given to:
 - a. Products that are durable, long lasting, reusable, or refillable.
 - b. Products containing high post-consumer recycled content.
 - c. Products that are easily recycled in the University's [materials management programs](#). Incoming products must be verified as recyclable in University programs. Contact the Office of Sustainability for verification.
 - d. Packaging that is reusable and or recyclable in University materials management programs; eliminating packaging or using the minimum amount necessary while still protecting the product.
 - e. Products produced locally or regionally to minimize environmental impacts of shipping and support the local economy.
2. Suppliers are expected to take back packaging and either reuse or recycle it. At the discretion of the Office of Sustainability, suppliers may be asked to track take-back tonnages.
3. Where applicable, products shall be made of the highest possible post-consumer recycled content.
4. Products containing microbeads or other microplastics shall not be purchased or used unless the elimination of these materials compromises health and safety, or interferes with research functions.
5. Purchasers should ensure that the product is necessary before making any purchase. Before ordering anything, purchasers should always check for items available free from other departments or the [Surplus Warehouse](#).
6. Purchasers are encouraged to order in bulk to save on the environmental impacts of shipping. Purchasers should be confident that all materials purchased in bulk will be utilized and not wasted.
7. Purchasing agents should consider all the costs associated with purchases greater than \$10,000, including installation, commissioning, operation, replacement, end of life, etc. A full life-cycle cost analysis should be completed for products and services with a cost greater than \$100,000. Insight gained from this analysis shall be incorporated into system design with corresponding specifications written into bid documents.

Supplier Sustainability & Contracts

The University will integrate sustainability requirements into its practices for competitive bidding in material and services procurement. This applies to Request for Quotations (RFQ) and Invitations to Bid (ITB).

1. All requests for proposals (RFP's) shall include the most appropriate version of the [Supplier Sustainability Questionnaire](#).
2. The evaluation scoring criteria for each RFP shall allocate a percentage of total possible points to the scoring of responses to the Supplier Sustainability Questionnaire

3. The Supplier Sustainability Questionnaire pertains to the internal operational practices of the supplier, not to the sustainability attributes of the actual product or service being procured by the University. The sustainability attributes of the actual product or service being procured through an RFP shall be evaluated and scored as part of the Scope in the evaluation team's scoring matrix. The evaluation team may request that a representative from the Office of Sustainability serve as a member of the evaluation team or as a technical advisor to assist in crafting the scope of the RFP and in evaluating and scoring the sustainability attributes of the goods and or services proposed by vendor respondents.

Purchasing Categories

Chemically Intensive Products and Services

Landscape Management:

1. Pest control shall be managed through prevention, physical and mechanical, and through the purchase of environmentally friendly products. As a last resort, use of the least toxic pest control substance is required.
2. Preference for organic grounds management, without the use of inorganic fertilizers and chemical pesticides, fungicides and herbicides (i.e., only ecologically preferable materials may be used).
3. Ecologically preferable materials include OMRI Listed products (Organic Materials Review Institute) and/or products listed/certified by an IFOAM-endorsed standard. Consistent with the NOFA Standards for Organic Land Care, rescue treatments using non-organic pesticides to control insect and disease problems that can cause significant harm are allowed, providing there are no effective organic alternatives.

Cleaning:

1. Cleaning solvents purchased and or used by University personnel and by janitorial contractors shall be biodegradable and phosphate free, unless such requirements will compromise quality of service. Citrus based or electrolyzed water cleaning is preferable versus other chemical cleaners.
2. All surfactants and detergents purchased and or used by University personnel and by janitorial contractors shall be readily biodegradable and shall not contain phosphates.
3. Cleaning and janitorial paper products, including industrial and institutional cleaning and janitorial products, purchased and or used by University personnel and by janitorial contractors shall meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - a. [Green Seal certified](#)
 - b. [Forest Stewardship Council certified](#)
 - c. [UL ECOLOGO certified](#)
 - d. [U.S. EPA Safer Choice labeled](#)

Cleaning products include general purpose bathroom, glass and carpet cleaners; degreasing agents; biologically-active cleaning products (enzymatic and microbial products); floor-care products (e.g., floor finish and floor finish strippers); hand soaps and hand sanitizers, disinfectants, and metal polish and other specialty cleaning products.

4. Total expenditures on cleaning and janitorial products for the fiscal year, including the breakout of green spend, must be reported annually to the Office of Sustainability.

Buildings

1. Sustainable purchasing practices shall be integrated into architectural and landscape designs, final construction documents, and the actual construction, maintenance and renovations of all property and facilities owned by or otherwise contracted by or for the University. All buildings, renovations, and facilities maintenance undertaken by the University or otherwise contracted by or for the University shall follow sustainable building practices for design, construction, operations, and maintenance, as described in the Building Design, Construction, Operations, and Maintenance Guidelines.
2. All electrical products purchased shall have [US EPA EnergyStar certification](#) if the Energy Star label is available for the product category. When Energy Star labels are not available for the product category, products purchased shall meet or exceed the upper 25% of energy efficiency [for their product category](#), as designated by the Federal Energy Management Program.
3. Only the most water efficient appliances available for a given use shall be purchased. This includes, but is not limited to, high performance fixtures like toilets, low flow faucets and aerators, and upgraded irrigation systems.
4. When drinking fountains are replaced, they shall be replaced with drinking fountains that also have bottle refilling capabilities. **Exception:** In the event of multiple water fountains in the same location at least one of them shall have water bottle refilling capabilities.
5. Amongst available comparable options, preference shall be given to bio-based paints, stains, adhesives, sealants, strippers and cleaning products. When bio-based options are not available, preference shall be given to products that protect indoor air quality as determined by one or more recognized [volatile organic compound \(VOC\) reduction standards](#).

Consumable Office Products

Paper:

1. When available, all paper purchases shall be:
 - a. Paper that contains 90 to 100 percent post-consumer content and/or agricultural residue,
OR
 - b. “FSC Recycled” certified.

When neither 90 to 100 percent post-consumer content nor “FSC Recycled” paper is viable, a paper purchase shall be “FSC Mixed” certified or have the highest recycled content possible. Any paper that is purchased that does not meet these requirements will diminish the University’s sustainability performance and standings in international sustainability rankings.

2. Preference shall be given to uncoated and non-laminated paper products whenever possible.
3. Total expenditures on paper for the fiscal year, including the breakout of green spend, must be reported annually to the Office of Sustainability.
4. Shredding services shall be obtained from companies who properly recycle the end product.

Other Office Activities:

1. Purchase recycled content office supplies (folders, writing pads) when available.
2. All members of the campus community shall be conscious of printing and try to reduce paper usage where possible.

- a. Reuse paper when possible. For instance, used paper should be turned into scratch pads for internal use, if it doesn't contain sensitive information. Single-sided scratch paper can be acquired from any of the STEP Labs.
 - b. The campus community shall ALWAYS use the duplex (double-sided) printing function unless single sided printing is required, or duplex printing is not available. When appropriate, use the multiple sheets per page option.
 - c. Reduce consumption of paper by using paperless office technology and practices.
3. Use online purchasing and search for products through online catalogs, and discourage the mailing of print catalogs. Advertising and campus postings should use the minimal amount of paper necessary.

Janitorial Paper Products:

1. Janitorial paper products, including industrial and institutional janitorial products, purchased and/or used by University personnel and by janitorial contractors shall meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - a. [Green Seal certified](#)
 - b. [Forest Stewardship Council certified](#)

Janitorial paper products include toilet tissue, tissue paper, paper towels, hand towels, and napkins.

Furniture and Furnishings

1. Before purchasing any new items, check the [Surplus Warehouse](#) for items.
2. When acquiring or replacing interior or exterior lighting, the most energy efficient equipment available shall be purchased.
3. All wood and wood contained within the products that the University purchases except paper shall be, in order of preference:
 - a. Reclaimed or salvaged.
 - b. Recycled content with the highest percentage recycled content available.
 - c. Certified as sustainably harvested by a comprehensive, performance-based certification system. The certification system shall include independent third-party audits with standards equivalent to, or stricter than, those of the FSC certification.
4. All wood and wood containing products shall also not contain any added urea formaldehyde or the least amount available for that product category.
5. Amongst available comparable options, preference shall be given to bio-based paints, stains, adhesives, sealants, strippers and cleaning products. When bio-based options are not available, preference shall be given to products that protect indoor air quality as determined by one or more recognized [volatile organic compound \(VOC\) reduction standards](#).

Information Technology (IT) Equipment

1. Before purchasing any new items, check the [Surplus Warehouse](#) for items. All new office technology (printers, computers, etc.) shall be purchased or approved through Information Technology who will ensure products meet the appropriate environmental standards.
2. All new desktop computers, notebooks, laptops, monitors, displays, slates, tablets, and imaging equipment purchased shall meet all Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) environmental criteria for certification at the gold level, as contained in the IEEE 1680 Standard for the Environmental Assessment of Personal Computer Products. All televisions and phones purchased shall meet the highest EPEAT rating available at the time of purchase. Mobile phones must be ECOLOGO, EPEAT certified.
3. All electrical products purchased shall have [US EPA EnergyStar certification](#) if the Energy Star label is available for the product category. When Energy Star labels are not available for the product category, products purchased shall meet or exceed the upper 25% of energy efficiency for [their product category](#), as designated by the Federal Energy Management Program.
4. Multifunction devices, copiers, and printers shall be compatible with the use of recycled content paper and remanufactured toner cartridges AND should have a duplex printing mode.
5. Equipment that uses main electricity is preferable. When batteries are essential, low mercury, cadmium or rechargeable batteries should be purchased. These batteries should be recycled at the end of their useful life.
6. For electronic equipment, including but not limited to computers, monitors, printers, and copiers, preference shall be given to suppliers who have a take back program for reuse or recycling through an eStewards-certified facility deemed appropriate by the Office of Sustainability and/or the Surplus Warehouse. Any electronics that cannot be taken back by the supplier should be returned to the Surplus Warehouse for recycling.
7. Total expenditures on IT Equipment for the fiscal year, including the breakout of green spend, must be reported annually to the Office of Sustainability.

Food and Food Service

1. Service ware made from expanded polystyrene, or Styrofoam™, including but not limited to cups, to-go containers, clamshells, and plates, shall not be purchased or used by University personnel and/or suppliers unless elimination of these materials compromises health and safety or interferes with research functions.
2. Food service providers and caterers are expected to participate in the following and track where applicable:
 - a. Diversion of fats, oils, grease from sewers and landfills.
 - b. Local food overage donation programs.
 - c. Elimination of prepackaged silverware sets, single serve condiments, and other prepackaged single use foods and food packaging.
 - d. Use of reusable to-go containers and the Good to Geaux program utilizing the OZZI system.

- e. When disposable service ware is unavoidable, use, exclusively, of paper products that meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - i. FSC Certified
 - ii. Green Seal certified
 - iii. BPI certified compostable
- f. Adherence to recyclability and waste reduction guidelines.
3. Preference shall be given to food and food service suppliers that provide local and/or community-based products and healthy and nutritional foods.
4. Preference shall be given to products that are sustainably and/or ethically produced as determined by one or more recognized food and beverage [sustainability standards](#).
5. Food contractors, food service suppliers, and event hosts shall minimize food waste and maximize the recovery of remaining food waste. The University partners with [Second Harvest Food Bank](#) to recover perishable food and get it to hunger-fighting partner agencies.
6. Event hosts and food service providers shall make meatless food options available whenever food is served.

Garments and linens

1. Preference shall be given to suppliers and their business partners who respect fundamental individual and employee rights and are committed to adopting responsible practices.
2. Providers and servicers of garments and linens shall provide detailed information on chemicals used in the cleaning process and identify any alternative products that could be used to reduce the negative impacts on the environment.
3. Providers shall source textiles, clothing, and other goods from manufacturers participating in Fair Labor Association supply chain initiatives, Fair Trade Certification, or another third-party anti-sweatshop monitoring.

Transportation and fuels

1. For all new vehicles and motor-operated equipment, preference shall be given to electric and battery-powered options. When batteries are essential, low mercury, cadmium or rechargeable batteries should be purchased. These batteries should be recycled at the end of their useful life.
2. When available, renewable fuels such as used vegetable oils, biodiesel, biogas, or renewably produced synthetic fuel shall be purchased for vehicles that can operate such alternative fuels without voiding applicable warranties or creating detrimental maintenance issues.
3. Virtual attendance at meetings and conferences shall be considered in order to lessen emissions associated with travel.

For questions regarding any part of this guide, contact the Office of Sustainability at sustainability@louisiana.edu or the Office of Purchasing at purchasing@louisiana.edu.

This guide was created with reference to the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) STARS Framework, Arizona State University, Colorado State University, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA), and the University of California System Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policies and Sustainable Procurement Guidelines.