



Founding Co-Sponsors



Create your own environmental purchasing program *A Step-By-Step Guide*

U.S. Communities provides detailed information and access to resources on our website at www.gogreencommunities.org

1. Determine if your Agency/Organization has signed up to participate or adhere to specific Environmental Programs or Mandates

- a. Cool Mayors – Climate Protection Commitment
- b. STARS
- c. LEED
- d. CPG
- e. SBRAC
- f. American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment

2. Prioritize Objectives (don't try to be perfect and you can't do it all at once)

- a. What is important to your organization?
 - i. *Saving forests*
 - ii. *Reducing global warming*
 - iii. *Reducing waste to landfills*
 - iv. *Ensuring clean plentiful water*
 - v. *Reducing hazardous chemicals in products*
 - vi. *Reducing hazardous waste*
- b. Where are you spending or wasting money?
- c. Tackle areas where the two overlap the strongest
- d. Tackle areas with the greatest potential environmental and economic benefit
 - i. *Electronics*
 - ii. *LED lighting*
 - iii. *Fuel economic vehicles*
 - iv. *CFL lighting*
 - v. *Building new shell improvements*
 - vi. *Combined heat and power*
 - vii. *Cellulosic biofuels*
 - viii. *Industrial process improvements*
 - ix. *Power plant conversion efficiency improvements*

3. Form a Green Team

- a. Include various stakeholders throughout your organization
 - i. *Environment*
 - ii. *Purchasing*
 - iii. *Fleet*
 - iv. *Waste management*
 - v. *Facilities*
 - vi. *Potential roadblocks/nay-sayers*

4. Align Environmental Priorities with Business Lines

- a. All Business Lines**
 - i. Save forests – reduce paper consumption – administration, accounting, business management, human services, information technology*
 - ii. Reduce global warming – save energy – building and facility management, fleet and vehicle services, information technology*
 - iii. Reduce waste to landfill – office operations, building and facility management, road and bridge*
 - iv. Clean plentiful water – reduce consumption and discharge - building and facility management, fleet and vehicle services, road and bridge*
 - v. Reduce hazardous chemicals – building and facility management, fleet and vehicle services, road and bridge*
 - vi. Reduce hazardous waste – information technology, fleet and vehicle services*
- b. Fleet and Vehicle Services**
 - i. Efficiency and fuel consumption*
 - ii. Hybrids and alternative, lower emitting fuels*
 - iii. Refined oils and bio-based lubricants*
 - iv. Cleaning and washing – least hazardous to accomplish task, citrus, bio-based*
- c. Building and Facility Management**
 - i. Cleaning procedures and chemicals – green cleaners*
 - ii. Energy efficiency of building, HVAC*
 - iii. Sustainable building design*
 - iv. Reduce and recover waste from construction and demolition*
- d. Information Technology**
 - i. Design for the environment – minimal hazardous materials, energy efficient, end of life disposal*
 - ii. Procedures to power down when not in use*
 - iii. Capable of duplexing and default to double sided*
 - iv. On-line data and record storage vs. paper*
 - v. Ability to telecommute and be mobile*
- e. Road and Bridge**
 - i. Use of reclaimed, recycled material in road construction*
 - ii. Minimize and manage storm water run-off to maintain surface water quality*
 - iii. Efficiency of equipment and clean fuels technology*
 - iv. Minimize use of hazardous chemicals – bio based alternatives*
- f. Office Operations**
 - i. On-line data and record storage vs. paper*
 - ii. Double sided copying*
 - iii. Plentiful opportunities to recycle*
 - iv. Use of recycled content paper and other products*
 - v. Utilize technology capabilities to fullest extent*

5. Crafting a Policy

- a. Don't reinvent the wheel; copy policies and policy outlines
- b. Policy can simply mandate products to be used – for example all printing and writing paper contain at least 30% post-consumer – many agencies implemented this option
- c. Drawback is standards change, new products constantly becoming available
- d. Define objectives with timelines and responsibilities
- e. Define attributes (product, process or manufacturer focused)
- f. Policy needs to be frequently revisited and updated
- g. Build in Policy Flexibility
- h. More effective policy mandates a procedure to review products and materials used and process to substitute green products
- i. Establish goals, focus areas and measurement strategy and expectations
- j. Build in measurements (life-cycle costs vs. initial costs)
- k. Communicate plan broadly

6. Policy Elements

- a. Responsibility for implementing green purchasing policy
- b. Establish environmental priorities – may differ depending on business lines, geography, etc.
- c. Outline process to evaluate; designate products; re-visit when changes needed; role of vendors, consultants and/or outside agencies
- d. Remember to build in reduce, reuse and recycle (sometimes not buying is the answer)

7. Building Your Team

- a. Purchasing staff know what business lines procure and therefore can help identify opportunities to realize environmental priorities
- b. Environmental staff can help identify alternatives available to improve environmental performance
- c. Business line staff can help identify performance standards and specifications

8. Product Teams

- a. Once a product or service has been identified, form product team of key departmental/business line, environmental and procurement staff
- b. Research opportunities and cost implications and develop work/evaluation plan for green alternatives
- c. Helps balance environmental priorities, performance requirements, budgetary considerations and purchasing procedures/rules

9. Implement (use resources available)

- a. Written Policies
- b. Cooperative Efforts
- c. Price Preferences
- d. Lifecycle Costing
- e. Best Value Purchasing
- f. Green Teams
- g. Vendor Outreach
- h. Approved Product Lists
- i. Eco-Labels
- j. Incentive Programs
- k. Employee Training
- l. Plagiarize
- m. Pilot Projects
- n. Quick Wins

10. Communicate to Organization

- a. Tell the environmental and economic benefits story
- b. Relate back to organizational priorities
- c. Celebrate success

11. Measure and Report

- a. Ask for reporting from vendors
- b. Use calculators to determine environmental benefits program has accomplished
www.gogreencommunities.org and **www.responsiblepurchasing.org**
- c. Communicate benefits annually to a wide audience
- d. Recognize efforts

12. Vendors

- a. Utilize current vendors in identifying green product alternatives
- b. Communicate environmental priorities and give opportunity to suggest product alternatives
- c. Generally will work to help meet environmental priorities
- d. Ask for latest industry innovations

13. Green Purchasing Workshop Benefits

- a. Excellent way to interface between business line staff and vendors
- b. Can help focus environmental priorities and specific product targets
- c. Opportunity to jointly celebrate success and reiterate importance of measurement

14. Outside Organizations

- a. U.S. Communities
- b. Center for New American Dream's Responsible Purchasing Network
- c. National Association of Counties Green Government Initiative
- d. EPA Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines
- e. State environmental department

Information also provided by:

Hennepin County

Responsible Purchasing Network

TerraChoice

Office Depot