



GUIDELINES STATEMENT

The intent of these Guidelines is to reduce the environmental impact of purchasing decisions and ensure they are aligned with University-wide sustainability goals, including the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Goal, by buying goods and services from manufacturers and suppliers committed to protecting the environment. “Green” purchasing minimizes negative environmental and social effects through the use of environmentally friendly products. General principles include: minimizing the consumption of non replaceable natural resources, using environmentally friendly products and processes, minimizing waste including packaging and waste generated by the eventual disposal of the product and maximizing the reuse and recycling of material.

REASON FOR GUIDELINES

To establish sustainable purchasing Guidelines in support of University wide sustainability goals including the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Goal Sustainability Principles and Green Building Standards.

WHO MUST COMPLY

All Harvard University schools, local units, Affiliate Institutions, Allied Institutions and University-wide Initiatives. Individuals who must follow these Guidelines are all University employees, University students, University contractors, and non-employees incurring travel expenses on behalf of the University.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Procurement Office:

- Incorporating sustainability related language in vendor agreements
- Negotiate with suppliers for University-wide terms, pricing and sustainable products and services
- Contract as appropriate with vendors and increase vendor options year over year
- Research new suppliers and products and/or respond to supplier inquiries from Campus Services and the University community
- Balance value concerns relating to long-term return on investments and other budgetary considerations
- Establish processes for data gathering and reporting on sustainable products and services from preferred vendors

Office for Sustainability:

- Review product offerings, recommend, and collaborate with University Preferred Vendors as appropriate.
- Work with University stakeholders to review and recommend standards and policies, as appropriate.
- Review and confirm vendor sustainability claims, as needed.
- Involve Procurement when evaluating sustainable products and services.
- Define metrics and University-wide reporting for products and services

Schools and Local Units:

- Implement and follow the Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines



PROCEDURES

As practical and appropriate, the University community is encouraged to procure environmentally preferable products and services using criteria that have been established by governmental or other widely recognized authorities. For example:

- [Harvard Green Building Standards](#)
- [Energy Star](#)
- [EPEAT](#)
- [Greenguard](#)
- [Green Seal](#)
- [Terra Choice](#)
- [Scientific Certification Systems](#)
- [Forest Stewardship Council Certification](#)
- [BPI Certified](#)

When entering into significant vendor relationships, consideration will be given to the environmental positioning of those vendors, favoring ones that have displayed environmental leadership in their respective markets and ones that employ environmentally sound, sustainable practices in the production and/or distribution of their goods or services. Vendors manufacturing goods should make all reasonable efforts to comply with zero emissions principles specified by [ZERI](#). Any contractual documents that arise during the relationship will reflect the vendor's commitment to pursue sustainable goals.

The University will work toward identifying and promoting environmentally preferable products and making them available through supplier contracts. Standardization on environmentally friendly products is also an option that may be given future consideration under certain conditions.

Consider the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) [5 Procurement Principles](#) as part of the procurement process.

PROCEDURAL AREAS OF FOCUS

Energy

Replace inefficient interior or exterior lighting with energy efficient equipment that is Energy Star rated.

Computers and electronic appliances should be Energy Star rated.

Laboratory equipment can have significant energy requirements. See [Green Labs at Harvard](#) for more efficient options.

Water

Purchase water efficient appliances which may include, but are not limited to, high performance fixtures such as toilets, low flow faucets and aerators.

Substitute bottled water service with filtration systems or other environmentally friendly options.

Toxins and Pollutants

Cleaning solvents should be biodegradable, phosphate-free and citrus based when the quality of service will not be compromised.



Cleaning products should meet Green Seal Certification standards and should be recommended for use by both internal and contracted vendors.

Products and equipment should not contain lead or mercury, unless an alternative is not available.

Biobased Products

As reasonable, biobased plastic products that are biodegradable and compostable such as bags, film, food and beverage containers and cutlery should be acquired by the university and/ or used by contracted vendors. Avoid the purchase of styrofoam.

Use biobased products, fuels and solvents (e.g. vegetable based inks and lubricants).

New products to be reviewed by Harvard's composting facility vendors.

Forest Conservation

As practical, ensure that wood and wood contained in products purchased is certified to be sustainably harvested. Certification standards used should be equal to or better than the Forest Stewardship Council certification. Avoid the purchase of tropical hardwoods.

Recycling

Post consumer recycled content should be maximized in purchased products whenever possible. Thirty percent post consumer waste recycled paper should be used for all applications, as appropriate. Buy recycled content office products (as marked) with special attention to recycled ink and toner cartridges.

Recycled, reusable or reground materials should be used when specifying concrete and cement for road construction projects, as practical.

Reclaimed stone and brick should also be used when possible.

Durable, long lasting, reusable or refillable products are always preferred when feasible.

Packaging/Transportation

Packaging should be reusable, recyclable or compostable, if possible. Use vendors that eliminate packaging or use the minimum amount necessary for product protection.

Consolidate orders; minimize campus deliveries and transportation distances when possible.

When possible, vendors should be encouraged to remove waste, debris, packaging or used products in the same vehicle with which they are delivering purchased equipment or goods.

Green Building

Green purchasing concepts should be integrated into architectural designs, final construction documents and the final construction of University buildings and renovation of facilities. As appropriate, buildings and renovations should follow green building practices for design, construction and operations as described in the LEED Rating System and Harvard's Green Building Standards.

Products such as paint, carpeting, adhesives, furniture and casework with the lowest amount of VOCs, highest recycled content and low formaldehyde should be used when practical.



Policy Title: Sustainable Purchasing
Guidelines
Responsible Office: Strategic Procurement
Effective Date: June 1, 2011
Revision Date: N/A

The use of chlorofluorocarbon and halon-containing refrigerants, solvents and other products should be phased out and new purchases for HVAC, refrigeration, insulation and fire suppression systems should not contain these chemicals.

RELATED POLICIES

[Sustainability Principles](#)
[GHG Reduction Goal](#)
[Green Building Standards](#)
[University-wide Temperature Policy](#)

RELATED DOCUMENTS AND OTHER RESOURCES

Strategic Procurement Office:
<http://vpf-web.harvard.edu/ofs/procurement/>

Office for Sustainability:
<http://green.harvard.edu/>

Green Building: Resources:
<http://green.harvard.edu/theresource/>
<http://green.harvard.edu/theresource/tech-prod/>

Green Office: Resources:
<http://green.harvard.edu/green-office/resources>

Preferred Vendors
http://vpf-web.harvard.edu/ofs/procurement/ven_par.shtml

Procurement Manual
http://vpf-web.harvard.edu/ofs/procurement/pdf/harvard_procurement_manual.pdf

CONTACTS

Strategic Procurement: <http://vpf-web.harvard.edu/ofs/procurement/index.shtml>,
Email: procurement@harvard.edu

Harvard Office for Sustainability: <http://green.harvard.edu>
Email: sustainability@harvard.edu

