



GREEN PURCHASING POLICY

In support of Pace University's commitment to sustainability, this Green Purchasing Policy facilitates decision-making at all levels of purchasing. All departments are expected to support the policy and implement the guidelines to the fullest extent possible.

Green purchasing integrates environmentally and socially responsible considerations into all purchasing decisions for materials, products, and services. Also known as "environmentally preferable purchasing," green purchasing includes the acquisition of products containing the highest recycled content possible, bio-based products, energy and water efficient products, toxic-free products. Green purchasing also includes buying products and services that are made and sold in socially acceptable fashions.

Product Lifecycle Approach

Products have environmental impacts throughout their lifetimes, from the early stages, including manufacturing and transport, and finally, end-of-life (i.e., "cradle-to-grave"). To meet expectations, requirements, and ensure compliance with regulations of sustainability with Pace University, suppliers must demonstrate a commitment to environmental stewardship in their products. The following areas should be closely examined before a purchase is made.

1) Product Origin and Transport

In making purchasing decisions, it is essential to consider the origin and transportation of products. Generally, the closer a product's site of origin, the fewer fossil fuels are required in its transport. Product origin includes both the company manufacturing the product as well as the geographic location of the original product. Some companies maintain internal environmental requirements for production sustainability. If feasible, such companies should be given priority in purchasing decisions. Questions to ask when examining the origin and transport of products include:

- a) Does the company have an environmental policy or standard? Is it reflected in their marketing materials, their web site and the knowledge of their sales staff?
- b) Is the company ISO 14001 certified or do they have any products that meet environmental standards or guidelines?
- c) Does the company or manufacturer have a past pollution record?
- d) Where is the product manufactured?
- e) What country or state is the product being shipped from?

2) Product Materials & Manufacturing

Products, materials selection and consistency is critical and all materials must meet high quality and performance standards while sourcing environmentally responsible materials, including those made from renewable resources. A manufacturing process of products should result in the most minimal environmental and health impacts as possible, and produced in ways that are socially responsible. Questions to ask when examining the product materials and manufacturing process:

- a) Is the product and its parts reusable? Are they recyclable?
- b) Is the product made from certified sustainable materials? How are the materials obtained?
- c) Does the product contain the highest percentage of post consumer waste (PCW) content as possible? Does it contain recycled or used material?
- d) Does the product have a long service life; is it economical to repair?
- e) Does the manufacturing of the product produce environmental harm? Are the workers exposed to unhealthy conditions?
- f) Does the company practice fair trade?
- g) Are the products or services produced in an ethical manner without violation of human rights?

3) Hazardous Material

Hazardous material has both negative environmental and human health consequences. Fortunately, non-hazardous options are available in the market for most materials used by the University. While non-hazardous alternatives are sometimes more expensive to purchase, their long-term benefits to the environment and to their human handlers more than make up for the initial investment. In all purchasing decisions, buyers should consider less-hazardous, sustainable options. Many products are specifically marketed as such. Questions to ask when examining a product's hazardous material include:

- a) Does the product contain any hazardous substances – either to human health or the environment?
- b) If hazardous materials are present, how will it complicate and increase the cost of recycling?
- c) Is there a non-toxic hazard-free alternative to the product?

4) Energy Consumption

Saving energy can significantly decrease overhead costs, while also reducing impact on the environment (e.g., by reducing release of pollution associated with the generation of energy or manufacturing of a product). Questions to ask when considering a product, or a product that consumes energy, such as light bulbs, appliances, and other equipment include:

- a) How is the product made, is it an energy intensive process, are there alternatives?
- b) Does the company use alternative energy sources, such as wind or solar, to produce its products?

- c) Is the product's energy efficiency high?
- d) Is the product rechargeable?
- e) Does the product run on renewable energy, either in whole or in part?

5) Packaging

The packaging of products, as well as the packaging of the shipments of products, generates an excessive amount of waste. Some companies are improving and continue to improve their manufacturing and shipping practices, but consumers can make an impact as well. A reduction in the amount of waste entering our waste streams, the supporting of eco-friendly packaging, and by recycling and reusing materials, we will help save natural resources and energy, and reduce pollution. Questions to ask when examining a product's packaging and its shipment material include:

- a) Is the item necessary?
- b) Can it be purchased in bulk to reduce the product's packaging amount?
- c) What is the packaging material made of? Is it recycled content, sustainable, biodegradable, or recyclable material?
- d) Can the packaging be reused, returned, composted, or properly recycled?
- e) Does the product and or its shipping container contain minimal packaging, or use returnable or reusable shipping containers?

6) Product End-of-Life

Minimizing environmental impacts also involves management of the waste generated at the end of the product's life. A disposal system and technology must exist through recycling; a product that is recyclable is only green if you can recycle it. Questions to ask when examining a product's end of life:

- a) Will the company take back their products for recycling?
- b) Are the parts of the product recyclable?
- c) Will the product biodegrade? If yes, in what time frame?

This Policy was drafted by the Purchasing Subcommittee of the GreenPace Sustainability Committee. For more information on Pace's green initiatives, visit <http://www.pace.edu/sustainability>.