

ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE PURCHASING (EPP): Resources for California Local Governments

Important EPP Certifications to Look For



Electronic Products Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) is an independent program that certifies “green” electronic equipment such as computers, monitors and laptops. See www.epeat.net.

Energy Star is a joint program of the US Department of Energy and US Environmental Protection Agency where you can find certified energy-efficient products (such as light fixtures, exit signs, appliances and office equipment). See www.energystar.gov



Environmental Choice is Canada’s environmental product certification program. It has issued standards for over 300 product categories (such as flooring, paint, electricity, cleaners, office equipment, and paper products), many of which are sold in California. See www.environmentalchoice.com/English/ECP%20Home.



Forest Stewardship Council certifies lumber and other building products made with sustainably harvested wood or that reduce wood consumption; go to www.fsc.org.



Green Seal is a nonprofit organization that set standards for products (such as janitorial cleaners, floor strippers, and paints) and certifies products that meet those standards. Find certified products, standards, and *Choose Green Reports* at www.greenseal.org.

Green-e is a labeling program established by the nonprofit organization, Center for Resource Solutions, which verifies electricity that has been generated using renewable sources such as solar and wind energy. See www.green-e.org.



Greenguard is a nonprofit organization that certifies products that impact indoor air quality. Find products (such as flooring, paints, furniture, and cleaning products) with low VOCs and other emissions. Some are certified for use near children: www.greenguard.org.

Scientific Certification Systems verifies green claims such as “biodegradable” or “contains recycled content”. SCS also oversees compliance with the California Gold Sustainable Carpet Standard and other environmental certifications; see www.scs-certified.com.



TransFair maintains a Fair Trade label issued to companies that import products such as coffee, tea, chocolate and rice that have been manufactured and sold under fair and safe working conditions. For a list of certified products, go to www.transfairusa.org.

US Department of Agriculture allows use of its organic label for products meeting federal standards that address pesticide and fertilizer use as well as other approved methods used to grow, harvest and process food and other agricultural products. Information about this organic certification program can be found at www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/.



Environmentally Preferable Products on California State Contracts

California Integrated Waste Management Board's online *EPP Tool Kit* features an *EPP Best Practices Manual* and other relevant resources. The Manual describes applicable State policies, an overview of how to find "Best Value Through Environmentally Preferable Purchasing," and links to specific information about how to procure EPPs in approximately 30 product categories such as rechargeable batteries, recycled carpeting and paint, low-mercury light bulbs, less-toxic cleaning products, and more. California's EPP resources can be found at www.green.ca.gov/EPP/default.htm.

Other EPP Resources

Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Network (EPPNet) is a free electronic list-serv that links public and private officials charged with purchasing environmentally preferable products and services.

It provides subscribers with quick access to EPP policies, specifications, vendors, and pricing and performance information. To subscribe, go to: www.nerc.org/eppnet.html.



Green Purchasing Institute provides hands-on technical support to local governments on EPP issues, including the development of environmental purchasing policies, bid specifications, contract language and outreach materials. Email: info@greenpurchasing.org.

GreenSpec Directory is a paper and online directory that lists over 2,100 environmentally preferable building products based on uniform environmental criteria. It can be found at www.buildinggreen.com.



King County, Washington is a municipal leader in environmental purchasing and has developed specifications for a wide variety of recycled, energy-efficient, and low-toxicity products. It issues periodic bulletins when new environmentally preferable products are added to County contracts and an annual report publicizing its successes. See www.metrokc.gov/procure/green/.

StopWaste is a public agency in Alameda County that promotes waste prevention, recycling and EPP. It offers an EPP resource guide, model policy, and fact sheets on rechargeable batteries, remanufactured toner cartridges, recycled content recreation and transportation products, and environmentally preferable cleaning and office products. See www.stopwaste.org.



Responsible Purchasing Network (RPN) is a member-based network of procurement stakeholders that maintains an online clearinghouse of information on EPP policies, programs, purchasing guides, reports, upcoming events and other related resources. See www.responsiblepurchasing.org.



US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) has developed Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines that recommend minimum recycled-content levels for dozens of products. For more information, go to www.epa.gov/cpg/products.htm. US EPA has also developed a suite of tools to help facilitate EPP, including a database listing:



- Contract language, specifications, and policies created by federal, state and local governments;
- Vendor lists of product brands that meet federal EPP standards; and
- EPP Updates, guidance documents, fact sheets, and case studies.



This fact sheet was compiled by The Green Purchasing Institute; please email info@greenpurchasing.org with any questions or comments.