# at the source

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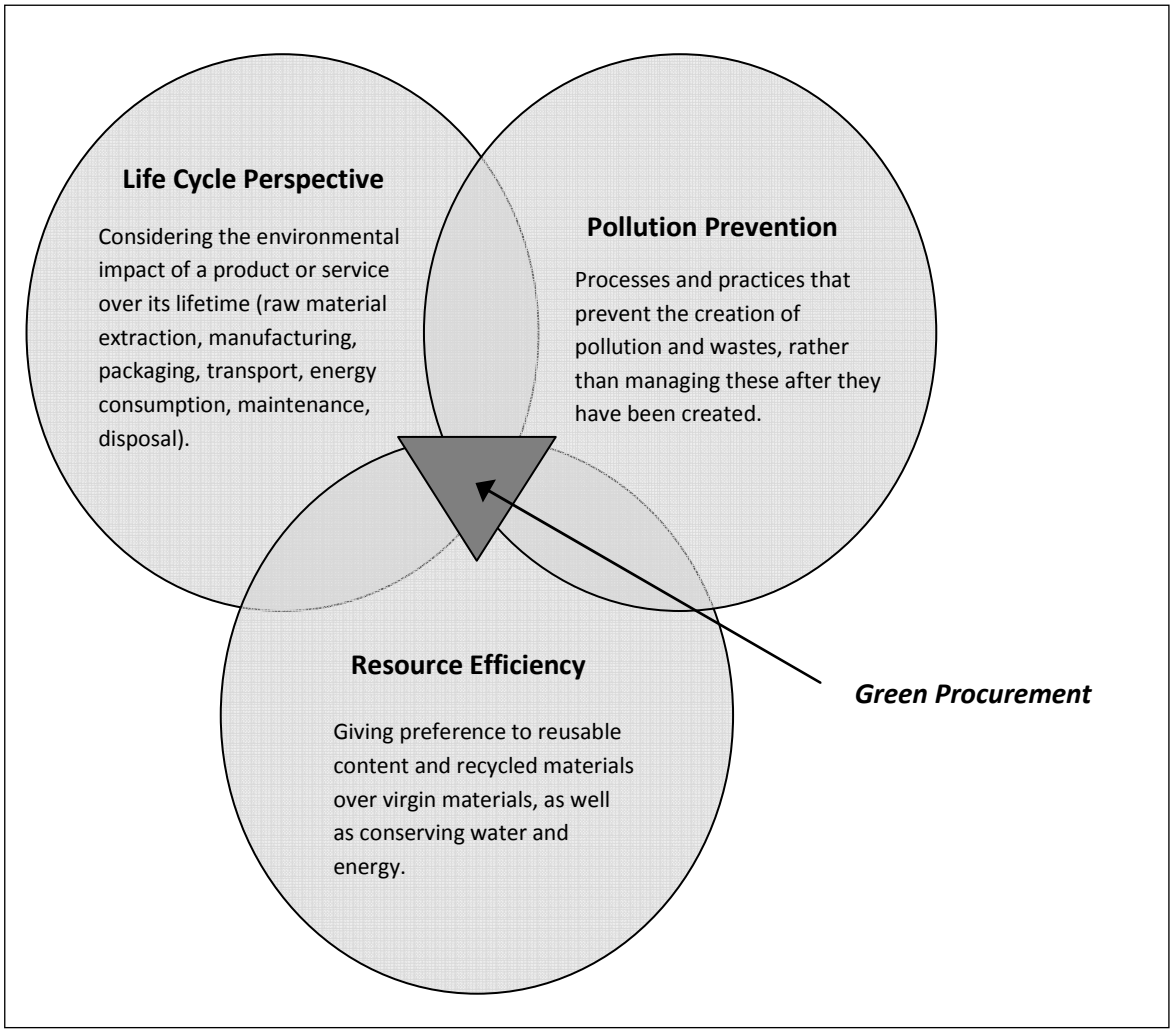
Green Procurement Edition

Spring 2008

## The Focus of this Issue

This issue of *at the source* focuses on 'green procurement or purchasing', sometimes called 'environmentally preferable purchasing' or 'environmentally responsible procurement'—the getting or buying of goods and services that are less harmful to the environment and our health than other available goods and services. Green procurement reduces the consumption of resources and the production of waste (both volume and toxicity), minimizes adverse health effects, and reduces costs. Rooted in the principle of pollution prevention, it contributes to sustainability—the capability of continuing on our present course for the foreseeable future without exhausting the planet's ability to support human life at something like the current population and quality of life.

The diagram below shows the main principles of green procurement.




Content from the Pollution Prevention Regional Information Centre (www.p2ric.org/TopicHubs/subsection.cfm?hub=13&subsec=1&nav=1)

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## The Business Case for Green Procurement

The decision to incorporate green procurement into business operations may be simple and straightforward, but implementing the decision may be far from easy. Changes to existing procurement activities can be challenging. They require a new way of thinking and acting, and affect long-standing habits and procedures. One of the first tasks for many organizations considering green procurement is building the business case to justify the need to change existing practices. This short article looks at the benefits and costs—the key elements—of a business case for green procurement.

The benefits of green procurement include financial, managerial, environmental and, in some cases, socio-economic ones. Cost savings are the most universally applicable financial benefits of green purchasing. Numerous case studies highlight the fact that those organizations practicing green procurement typically save money. Qualitative benefits, such as improved image, may impact the bottom line as well. In terms of managerial benefits, green procurement reduces business risk, increases productivity, and improves supply chain management. Environmental benefits from green purchasing often materialize as financial and management benefits, for not only the organization initiating the purchase, but the community as well. Green purchases shrink an organization's environmental footprint, resulting in reduced demand for water, natural resources and energy, while minimizing the generation of wastes and emissions.

The costs of establishing a green procurement program include costs for labour and research required to establish a program, stakeholder engagement expenses (i.e. informing, training and working with staff, suppliers and other stakeholders), and potential cost premiums on products with lower environmental footprints. There are tactics for minimizing the costs associated with determining which products have a lower, life cycle, environmental impact. For example, using work done by a third party, such as specifying Eco-logo certified products which have undergone an independent assessment of environmental attributes, reduces the internal staff labour needed to research and determine which products have a smaller environmental footprint. Another costing area that needs factoring into the equation is cost avoidance. Organizations without green purchasing programs could suffer reputation, climate change and other risks, and experience productivity and innovation lags, relative to their competitors. As interest in environmental protection continues to grow, costs associated with cost avoidance are expected to increase.

One tool used to assist purchasers with managing the financial implications of a green purchasing policy is life cycle costing. Life cycle costing is a procurement evaluation technique for determining the lifetime of the product, including acquisition, operation, maintenance and disposal. This technique of illustrating the cradle to grave costs of product ownership can draw out the hidden costs of products and services, thus levelling the playing field for products and services with environmental attributes that may have higher initial costs. Life cycle costing is an important concept in creating the business case for many sustainability-based purchasing decisions. It is designed to assess the true profitability of business investments by considering the time horizon that reflects the entire life cycle, and the economic costs associated with each phase of the cycle, of a product or service. While conventional purchasing evaluation focuses on the acquisition cost of a product or service, life cycle costing evaluation examines hidden costs from production to disposal, in addition to the acquisition cost.

In summary, making the business case for green procurement is an important step in the development of a green procurement program. It is essential for effectively highlighting the benefits and costs of buying environmentally preferable products. Life cycle costing also becomes a tool for implementing green procurement. The business case should be understandable by stakeholders at all levels. It will serve as a building block for the remainder of the green procurement program, and a springboard to implementation.

## Implementing a Green Procurement Program - Important Steps

Many governments, businesses and institutions now have policies to ensure they include environmental considerations in their purchasing decisions. Increased interest in green procurement has resulted in a number of guides and resources intended to assist organizations and businesses with policy development and implementation. Common recommendations in these guides suggest that some steps are vital for introducing a successful green procurement program. These steps are summarized below.

**1. Obtain support from management**: Support may include the drafting of a policy statement, creating a related job description, providing funding, or offering training. When seeking support, make the business case for green procurement (see *The Business Case* article in this issue) and include successful case studies from similar organizations (see the *Examples of Green Procurement* article in this issue).

**2. Involve staff**: You could create a green procurement committee, with representatives from different departments or organization levels. A mix of staff contributing to the plan helps keep the goals reasonable and attainable, creates staff ownership of the program, and fosters staff buy-in. Alternatively, some guides suggest that the green procurement program be the focus of a single individual who works one-on-one with the purchasing decision-makers throughout the organization. Depending on an organization's size and framework, either model, or a combination, may work best.

**3. Set goals**: As a first step, do a baseline review of current purchasing practices (e.g. who is purchasing, what is purchased, quantities, cost, etc.). Goals should be prioritized and S.M.A.R.T.—specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound. A further suggestion, take a two-pronged approach: set final goals for the resulting purchasing policy; as well as milestones toward the final goals. Once the goals have been set, create a timeline and action plan that clearly outline who is responsible for each element of the plan and how they will be held accountable.

**4. Evaluate and consider feedback**: Create a formal procedure for continuously collecting feedback from staff that use new 'green' products. Evaluate this feedback, and use it to adjust the green procurement plan where applicable. Testing new products to assess their efficiency, quality and user-friendliness, may take a few months or longer. In addition, you will need a tracking system in place, to determine progress towards your green procurement goals. Determining progress may involve regular audits or reviews.

While steps 1 to 4 are the most common in creating and implementing a green procurement plan, other common considerations include:

- Create formal policies and procedures: to direct future purchases across the organization.
- Consider communication and publicity: internally, among staff, and externally, among suppliers and customers.
- Train and educate: direct sessions at purchasers, top management, and new employees.
- Introduce a pilot project: one that is small and manageable, with a focused goal and easy to measure results.
- Consider environmental health and safety (EHS) goals: some EHS and environmental goals will likely overlap and enable addressing both environmental performance and staff health.
- Start with existing suppliers: before assuming you will need new suppliers, ask current suppliers if they offer environmentally preferable products.
- Network and share information with others in your sector: find out what similar organizations are doing by speaking with peers and taking a look at existing green procurement plans (see the *Examples of Existing Green Procurement Programs* article in this issue).
- Consider ways to reduce: In addition to making purchasing decisions more environmentally responsible, consider ways to reduce the amounts of products you use.

The resources in the next section will help you implement these steps and considerations…

## Guides for Implementing Green Procurement Policies

As mentioned in the previous section, a number of guides exist to assist organizations and businesses with starting a green procurement program. Many of the guides are focused on a particular sector (e.g. governments, companies, schools) but include useful, transferable information. Here are some that may help you.

**Canadian Resources:**

*Sustainable Purchasing Guide*, Greater Vancouver Regional District
Applies to: businesses/organizations
PDF format
www.gvrd.bc.ca/smartsteps/pdfs/SustainablePurchasing.pdf

*Business and Sustainable Development: A Global Guide*, BSD.com
Applies to: businesses/organizations
Website format
www.bsdglobal.com/tools/bt_green_pro.asp

*Environmentally Responsible Procurement*, Canadian Standards Association
Applies to: businesses/organizations
Hard copies for sale for $35
www.csa-intl.org/onlinestore/GetCatalogDrillDown.asp?Parent=472

*Green Paper Procurement Policy*, Forest Stewardship Council of Canada
Applies to: businesses/organizations
PDF format
www.fsccanada.org/SiteCM/U/D/4B949D6FB0F926FC.pdf

*10 Ways to Start or Enhance Your Sustainability Purchasing Strategy*, Sustainability Purchasing Network
Applies to: businesses/organizations
PDF format
www.buysmartbc.com/UserFiles/File/SPN-IC-Tips%20to%20Get%20Started%20Final.pdf

*Environmental Purchasing Policies 101*, Commission for Environmental Cooperation – North American Green Purchasing Initiative
Applies to: businesses/organizations/governments
PDF format
www.cec.org/files/PDF//NAGPI%20Policy%20Paper2e.pdf

**International Resources:**

*Making the Green Purchasing Change*, Pollution Prevention Regional Information Centre
Applies to: businesses/organizations
Website format
www.p2ric.org/TopicHubs/subsection.cfm?hub=13&subsec=12&nav=12

*Environmentally Preferable Purchasing How-To Guide*. Health Care Without Harm
Applies to: hospitals
PDF format
www.noharm.org/library/docs/Going_Green_5-1_Environmentally_Preferable_Pur.pdf

*10-Step Guide to Environmentally Preferable Purchasing*, Hospitals for a Healthy Environment
Applies to: hospitals
Website format
cms.h2e-online.org/ee/waste-reduction/epp/10step/

*Toolkit,* Mayor of London's Green Procurement Code
Applies to: companies/organizations
Membership required to access the document. Option to join on-line.
www.greenprocurementcode.co.uk/index.php?q=node/119

*Buying Green: A handbook on environmental public procurement*, European Commission
Applies to: government
PDF format
ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/pdf/buying_green_handbook_en.pdf

*The Procura + Manual*, Sustainable Procurement Campaign – Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI)
Applies to: government
www.iclei.org/index.php?id=796

The guides above will help you with implementation, as will the examples in the next section.

## Examples of Existing Green Procurement Programs

In addition to the green procurement guides covered in the previous section, useful information can be gathered by considering the green procurement programs of other organizations. Listed below are a number of current green procurement plans that have been put in place by governments, businesses and institutions across Canada.

**Institutions:**

*Green Procurement Program,* London Health Science Centre
www.lhsc.on.ca/ecologic/procure/lhscprog.htm
www.lhsc.on.ca/About_Us/Accountability/Caring_for_our_Environment/index.htm#Green

*Green Procurement,* University of Waterloo
www.wastemanagement.uwaterloo.ca/greenprocure.htm

*Environmental Purchasing Policy*, Vancouver Aquarium
www.vanaqua.org/ems/documents/VAEnvironmentalPurchasing2006_000.pdf

**Companies:**

*Environmentally Responsible Purchasing Policy,* Apotex Inc.
www.apotex.com/CorporatePurchasing/EnvironmentallyResponsiblePurchasingPolicy.pdf

*For the Greener Good*, Wal-Mart-Canada.
www.forthegreenergood.ca

*Wood Purchasing Policy*, Home Depot
corporate.homedepot.com/wps/portal/Wood_Purchasing

**Governments:**

*Environmental Purchasing Guide,* City of Richmond
www.richmond.ca/services/environment/policies/purchasing.htm

*Sustainable Environmental and Ethical Purchasing Policy,* City of Calgary
content.calgary.ca/CCA/City+Hall/Business+Units/Finance+and+Supply/Policies/Sustainable+Environmental+and+Ethical+Procurement+Policy+SEEPP/Sustainable+Environmental+and+Ethical+Procurement+Policy+SEEPP.htm

*Environmentally Responsible Procurement Policy,* City of Toronto
www.toronto.ca/tenders/environment.htm

*Procurement Services Branch*, Government of Manitoba
www.gov.mb.ca/gs/psb/green.html

*Greening Government – Procurement*, Government of Canada
www.greeninggovernment.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=256986C5-1

*Position on Forestry*, IKEA
www.ikea.com/ms/en_CA/about_ikea_new/about/read_our_materials/ikea_position_forestry.pdf

*The Code of Conduct on Purchasing Home Furnishing Products,* IKEA
www.ikea.com/ms/en_CA/about_ikea_new/about/read_our_materials/IWAY_purchasing_home_furnishing_products.pdf

*Environmental Paper Procurement Policy,* Staples
www.staples.com/sbd/img/content/soul/pdf/staples_environmental_paper_procurement_policy.pdf

**Also check out…**

*Green Procurement: Good Environmental Stories for North Americans*, Commission for Environmental Cooperation of North America
www.cec.org/files/pdf/ECONOMY/2003-GreenProcurementReview_en.pdf

## Challenges to Green Procurement – 'Stumbling blocks on the green buying path'

There are challenges to green procurement—costs and barriers. They are the flip side to the benefits, and can be stumbling blocks on the green buying path. But with a little care and effort, most are overcome. Here is a summary of the challenges you may encounter to your green procurement, and some ways to deal with them.

**Price**: Some people perceive that green products and services are more expensive than conventional alternatives. In some cases, this may be true, particularly where development costs are reflected in the price; but, often there is no significant difference. Some green products may have a higher up-front purchase price, but will cost less over their lifetime. For example, a non-toxic alternative to a toxic product will cost less to transport, store, handle, and discard. It will require fewer permits, less staff training, and the consequences of an accident will be greatly reduced. A product with less packaging and easily recyclable or reusable packaging will have a lower disposal cost.

*You can:*

- Start or join a group purchasing network (paper buying club, for example) to reduce costs through volume purchasing; to learn about the successful 'Green Procurement Network' of 10 health care laboratories in Winnipeg, Manitoba, visit Environment Canada's EcoAction website at www.ec.gc.ca/ecoaction/success_display_stories_e.cfm?story_ID=12030121
- Use total cost accounting (TCA), also known as total cost assessment and total cost of ownership, to determine total cost; for a brief introduction to TCA and a case study, visit the website of the University of Carolina's Sustainable University Initiative www.sc.edu/sustainableu/GadalaMaria2001TotalCostLecture.pdf
- Lobby government for higher standards on products and services to level the playing field

**Lack of corporate commitment**: To implement green procurement, an organization must have commitment from all levels, including senior management and purchasing agents.

*You can:*

- Talk to individuals with a variety of functions (project managers, purchasing officers, end-users, facility managers, suppliers and contractors) about their habits, concerns and inputs.
- Develop and approve a corporate policy statement outlining the commitment to green procurement; for more information, see 'Buying Green as an Industry' on the Kent County, DE, USA website at www.kentcountydpw.com/green_products.htm
- Put together a communications strategy

**Insufficient knowledge**: Many organizations are unfamiliar with the concept of green procurement, or with the options available to them. For an organization to participate, it must have an understanding of concepts, vocabulary and terms.

*You can:*

- Do some research, for example visit the following websites:
  - Sustainability Purchasing Network www.buysmartbc.com/
  - *Greening Government*, Government of Canada www.greeninggovernment.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=256986C5-1
  - *Buy Green*, Green Ontario www.greenontario.org/buygreen/greenp.html
  - *Procurement Services*, Government of Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation www.gov.mb.ca/gs/psb/green.html
  - *Green Procurement Practice,* University of Waterloo www.wastemanagement.uwaterloo.ca/greenprocurementpractice.htm
- Learn from others: join a green purchasing network or collaborative
- Initiate green purchasing with, 'low hanging fruit' purchases to build momentum for your green procurement program
- Organize a workshop or training session

**Availability**: Often, local distributors do not stock green products, or only small quantities, resulting in delays in obtaining the product. Increasing market demand will help to overcome this obstacle.

*You can:*

- Work collaboratively with distributors, suppliers and other purchasers; make personal visits
- Learn from others: join a purchasing network or collaborative
- Use a Supplier Code of Conduct or Environmental Statement as a tool to educate vendors about green

Continued on the following page…

*Challenges* cont'd…
expectations, for a statement example see the University of Waterloo's Green Procurement Practice at www.wastemanagement.uwaterloo.ca/greenprocurementpractice.htm

**No acceptable alternative**: There may be a lack of acceptable alternatives to the present product. For example, a few years ago in the furniture and auto industries, the use of water-based finishes as an alternative to solvent-based ones was impeded by technical and quality difficulties which were costly to overcome. Growing demand will stimulate the development of new and better 'green' products.

*You can:*
- Work collaboratively with distributors, suppliers and other purchasers; make personal visits
- Use a Supplier Code of Conduct or Environmental Statement as a tool to educate vendors about green expectations

**No specifications**: It is important that you ask suppliers to provide the environmental specifications of the products and services they offer. Purchasers, in the same way, must clearly define their needs and requirements.

*You can:*
- Model contracts and product specifications incorporating green requirements are available for many commonly purchased products and services. Internet research or resource organizations, such as the Sustainability Purchasing Network (www.buysmartbc.com/), can help.
- Let someone else do the work: buy products with environmental or social certification wherever possible. Third-party certified is best. For more information, see the article on *Green Certification and Ecolabelling* in this issue, and the websites below:
  - Ecologo www.ecologo.org
  - EnergyStar oee.nrcan.gc.ca/energystar/english/consumers/index.cfm

You may also choose industry-certified:
  - BC Hydro's eCatalogue www1a.bchydro.com/ecatalog/main.jsp
  - Fair Trade Labelling Organization International www.fairtrade.net/
  - SA8000, Social Accountability International www.sa-intl.org/
- Work collaboratively with distributors, suppliers and other purchasers
- Use a Supplier Code of Conduct or Environmental Statement as a tool to educate vendors about green expectations

**Purchasing habits**: The 'We've always done it this way' mentality can be difficult to overcome. There may also be existing relationships between purchasers and suppliers that make it difficult to switch to alternatives.

*You can:*
- Talk to individuals with a variety of functions (project managers, purchasing officers, end-users, facility managers, suppliers and contractors) about their habits, concerns and inputs.
- Run a training session or workshop
- Put together a communications strategy
- Learn from others: join a purchasing network or collaborative
- Use 'Consider This' figures and case studies to help quantify and illustrate the benefits
- Create a procurement team with representatives from various functions in the business

It is worth noting, that while there are material costs associated with developing and implementing green procurement, there are also significant costs in not doing so. Organizations without green procurement programs could suffer reputation damage, and experience productivity and innovation lags relative to their competitors. As consumers, governments, NGOs, communities and investors become more concerned about environmental and social conditions, the costs of not buying green will grow.

## On-line Tools for Implementing Green Procurement Policies

In addition to implementation guides and program examples, there are specific on-line tools you can use in green procurement policy implementation.

*Eco-Eval Self-Assessment Tool,* North American Green Purchasing Initiative

This tool is designed to help evaluate an organization's environmental purchasing initiatives and identify opportunities for improvement. Eco-Eval can be used by any organization with a structured purchasing system and is not limited to a specific commodity or type of service.
www.cec.org/eco-sat/Home.aspx

*Green Procurement Online*, Jacques Whitford (on-line course fee of $40)

This on-line course is designed to increase participants' awareness of why and how to buy green. It is intended for anyone who makes purchases of products and/or services, and contains useful information for buying green at work and at home.
www.solutions.ca/greenprocurementonline/

*Green Procurement Policy Toolkit,* Local Authority Environmental Management and Protection (LEAP)

The objective of this tool is to help public authorities effectively develop and implement green procurement practices. The LEAP project is Europe-based and funded by the European Commission, however the document contains useful information and applicable considerations for Canadian practitioners.
www.iclei-europe.org/index.php?id=3119

*Green Procurement Topic Hub,* Pollution Prevention Regional Information Centre (P2RIC)

The P2RIC's green procurement topic hub lists a variety of on-line tools, calculators and software that can assist with specific green procurement choices. Tools are available to assist with building supplies, transportation, energy and many other purchasing considerations.
www.p2ric.org/TopicHubs/bibliography.cfm?hub=13&subsec=100&nav=100#Software/electronic%20tool

*Electronics Environmental Benefits Calculator (EEBC),* EPA Federal Electronics Challenge

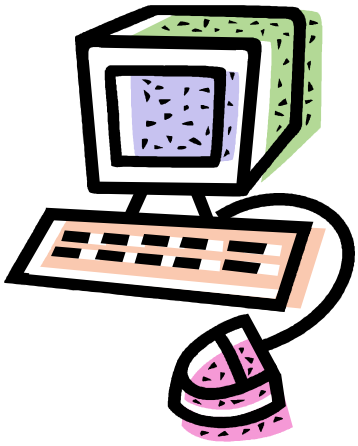
The EEBC was developed to assist organizations in estimating the environmental benefits of greening their purchase, use and disposal of electronics. The EEBC is available to any organization interested in determining the benefits of their own electronics stewardship activities. The current version of the EEBC evaluates electronics stewardship activities associated with desktop processors (CPUs), cathode ray tube (CRT) and liquid crystal display (LCD) monitors, and notebook computers as well as the benefits of reusing and recycling mobile telephones.
www.federalelectronicschallenge.net/resources/bencalc.htm

*Paper Calculator*, Environmental Defense

The Paper Calculator shows the environmental impacts of using different types of paper across their full lifecycle. You can compare different papers by entering the grade of paper you use and how much. The tool allows you to compare individual papers or groups of papers. Results can be saved in an easy-to-read report, to help your company, community, school, non-profit or other organization measure the benefits of better paper choices.
www.edf.org/papercalculator/

*Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT),* Green Electronics Council

EPEAT is a system to help purchasers in the public and private sectors evaluate, compare and select desktop computers, notebooks and monitors based on their environmental attributes. EPEAT also provides a clear and consistent set of performance criteria for the design of products, and provides an opportunity for manufacturers to secure market recognition for efforts to reduce the environmental impact of its products.
www.epeat.net/



**Purchasing Guidelines:**

*Guide to Environmental Purchasing,* G.I.P.P.E.R.
This guide helps purchasers incorporate environmental considerations into their organization's procurement process through the application of environmental criteria to target products and services. The guide provides an overview of frequently used products and presents guidelines, procurement recommendations and 3Rs recommendations for each. Please note that an updated version of the Guide will be released in Spring 2008 and will be available at www.gipper.ca (this site should be active by April 2008).
www.pmac.ca/PDF/gipper.pdf

*Purchasing Guidelines*, Green Purchasing Network - Japan Environmental Association
Product types covered by these purchasing guidelines include printing and copying paper, copiers, printers, fax machines, office furniture, stationary and office supplies, personal computers, refrigerators, air conditioners and many others. Most recently, the guidelines were expanded to service fields such as printing, hotels and lodges. For each product type a list of issues for consideration is provided.
www.gpn.jp/English/guideline.html

*Purchasing Guidelines*, Responsible Purchasing Network

Purchasing guides on this website have been produced for a range of products and services, including bottled water, cleaners, computers, fleets, lighting, office electronics, paint, light-duty tires and wheel weights. Each purchasing guide contains a number of sections that cover environmental issues, best practices, cost, quality, supply, policies, specifications and other topics for the particular product or service.

www.responsiblepurchasing.org/purchasing_guides/all/

## Green Certification and Ecolabelling

Congratulations, you have committed to implementing a green procurement program! Green claims, labels, logos and symbols abound, but some are no more than 'green washing'—unsubstantiated or misleading claims about environmental benefits. How will you know whether or not what you consider buying really is 'green'? Green certification, and a resulting, internationally recognized ecolabel, will help you.

'Green certification' is the attestation by an impartial, third party that a product or service meets specified environmental performance criteria. 'Ecolabelling' is a voluntary and international method of showing this certification. An 'ecolabel' identifies overall environmental preference of a product or service within a specific product/service category, based on life cycle considerations. There are many different voluntary (and mandatory) environmental performance labels and declarations. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has identified three broad types of voluntary labels; ecolabelling fits under the Type I designation. For more information on the three types, visit the Global Ecolabelling Network at www.gen.gr.jp/

Ecolabelling arose from growing global concern for environmental protection on the part of governments, businesses and the public. As businesses recognized that environmental concerns could be translated into a market advantage for certain products and services, various environmental declarations/claims/labels emerged (e.g. natural, recyclable, eco-friendly, low energy, recycled content, etc.). While these have attracted consumers seeking to reduce adverse environmental impacts through their purchasing choices, they have also led to some confusion and scepticism on the part of consumers.

Without guiding standards and investigation by an independent third party, consumers may not be certain that companies' assertions guarantee that each labelled product or service is an environmentally preferable alternative. This concern with credibility and impartiality has led to both private and public organizations

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providing third-party labelling. In many cases, ecolabelling programs operate nationally or regionally: Canada has the EcoLogo program.

Canada's EcoLogo is a widely recognized and respected certification of environmental leadership. By setting standards and certifying products in more than 120 categories, EcoLogo helps you identify, trust, buy, and sell environmentally preferable—green—goods and services. Launched by the Canadian federal government in 1988, it is North America's oldest environmental standard and certification organization (and the second oldest in the world). It is accredited by the Global Ecolabelling Network as meeting the international ISO 14024 standard for environmental labels. Currently, there are 122 Certification Criteria Documents (CCDs) addressing over 250 product types. EcoLogo CCDs are developed in an open, public and transparent process, with a broad base of stakeholder participation including user groups, product producers, government/regulators, general science-based representatives, environmental non-governmental organizations, and other environmental advocates. The criteria address multiple environmental attributes related to human health and environmental considerations throughout the life cycle of the product. For more about EcoLogo, CCDs, and more than 7,000 EcoLogo-certified products from hundreds of manufacturers, visit www.ecologo.org/en . The EcoLogo program is managed by TerraChoice Environmental Marketing, Inc. For information on getting your products certified to the EcoLogo standard, visit www.terrachoice.com/.

Other countries have organizations similar to TerraChoice that provide certification and labelling services. In the US, Green Seal (www.greenseal.org/), a non profit organization, provides science-based environmental certification standards that help manufacturers, purchasers, and end users make environmentally responsible choices. For product categories, programs, and ecolabels worldwide, visit www.gen.gr.jp/product.html, and see the sidebar.

When designing or buying a building, the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System can help you make greener choices. It encourages and accelerates global adoption of sustainable green building and development practices through the creation and implementation of universally understood and accepted tools and performance criteria. It is a third party certification program and a nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings. LEED gives building owners and operators the tools they need to have an immediate and measurable impact on their buildings' performance. It promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality. LEED projects are in progress in 41 different countries, including Canada, Brazil, Mexico and India. For more information on LEED in Canada, visit www.cagbc.org/; and in the US, visit www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CategoryID=19.

Buying green, and wading through the green claims, labels, logos and symbols, can be challenging, but green certification and ecolabelling help you find your way to greener purchases.

**Useful Resources for Product Consideration:**

*Ecolabelling.org,* Big Room Inc.
Ecolabelling.org is a global, independent database of ecolabels. Addressing the problem that there are a vast number of ecolabels currently in the marketplace, with varying levels of quality control, the website helps consumers determine what different ecolabels mean, and as such, which ones best represent their interests.
ecolabelling.org/

*Guidelines for Environmental Labeling,* Competition Bureau of Canada
These guidelines were developed for application to green marketing campaigns. The intention of the guidelines is to promote green labels that advertise credible and truthful information which can be readily acquired and understood.
www.competitionbureau.gc.ca/epic/site/cb-bc.nsf/en/00557e.html

*Sorting out Green Claims,* U.S. Federal Trade Comission
This fact sheet has been prepared to help consumers understand green claims and judge their merit.
www.ftc.gov/opa/1999/04/green.shtm

*Choose Green Reports*, Green Seal.
These reports are based on market surveys, peer-reviewed, and provide an overview of specific subjects.
www.greenseal.org/resources/reports.cfm

## Green Procurement and the Home

Green procurement is not just for large organizations. It provides benefits for us as families and individuals at home as well. Here are ideas for six common household purchasing areas.

**Cleaning.** A good place to start is with cleaning products and services. In many cases, there are green alternatives to conventional cleaning products. For example, try baking soda as an air freshener, or put ½ cup of borax in your washer instead of bleach. For information on household cleaners and green alternatives, view the Environmental Health Association of Nova Scotia's Guide to Less Toxic Products at lesstoxicguide.ca and click on 'Household Cleaners'. Also, you can make your own green cleaners using simple, reliable recipes, familiar household ingredients (such as baking soda, borax, Castile soap, lemon juice and vinegar), and clean, empty containers. For more on ingredients and recipes, see Metro Vancouver's Better Solutions brochure at www.gvrd.bc.ca/recycling-and-garbage/pdfs/BetterSolutions.pdf and Consumer Reports' Greener Choices web site at www.greenerchoices.org/products.cfm?product=greencleaning&page=RightChoices.

Most of us have some of our clothes dry cleaned. Many dry cleaners are greening their practices: modernizing equipment, changing dry cleaning solvents or switching to modern wet-cleaning, and initiating recycling programs. To learn about greener dry cleaners, and to find one near you, visit the Canadian Centre for Pollution Prevention web site at www.c2p2online.com and click on 'Green Dry Cleaners'.

**Gardening and pest management.** Gardening is a natural for green procurement, and buying or making your own compost bin—garden and vegetable waste in, organic fertilizer out— is a good beginning. Some municipalities provide compost bins, and in some cases compost, to homeowners, see if your does. Thinking about a new lawn and garden? Consider alternative landscaping, such as a low maintenance ground cover and native wildflowers. If you have a lawn, keep it 'green' and healthy naturally: consider natural organic fertilizers, alternative pesticide treatments, and integrated pest management. For example, instead of conventional chemical herbicide, corn gluten meal can prevent crabgrass and other weed seeds from germinating without threatening anything else, while ladybugs can be used to control aphids. For more information visit, the University of California's Integrated Pest Management web site at www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/menu.homegarden.html and Cornell University's Lawn-care web site at www.gardening.cornell.edu/lawn/lawncare/index.html. Also, see the web site of Vancouver-based City Farmer www.cityfarmer.org/grass.html.

**Energy**. Looking for greener home energy? It's out there. See *Green Procurement of Energy—'How green is your energy?'* in this issue.

**Appliances**. Alas, they don't live forever. When shopping for a new stove, refrigerator, freezer, washing machine, dryer, TV, or other appliance, consider the life cycle cost, especially the ongoing amount and cost of energy the appliance will use. A greener, more energy efficient model may cost more to buy, but your long term operating savings will likely be significant, especially as energy costs continue to rise. When buying, look for the EnvironmentalChoice, EnergyStar and EnerGuide logos and rating. For more information on EnerGuide and for appliance ratings, visit the Natural Resources Canada's Residential web site at oee.nrcan.gc.ca/Equipment/english/index.cfm?text=N&printview=N

**Space heating and cooling systems and domestic hot water heaters.** Green, efficient heating and cooling systems—high efficiency furnaces and air conditioning, condensing boilers, and solar and geothermal (earth energy) systems—will reduce your green house gas emissions and annual operating costs immediately, can pay for themselves in 10 to 15 years or less, and will continue to save you energy costs. A well designed, solar-thermal domestic hot water system can provide 50 to 75% of your annual hot water needs, with a simple payback of four to eight years. The electricity saved over 20 years represents more than 50 tonnes of avoided carbon dioxide emissions. When considering these systems, look for the EnvironmentalChoice, EnergyStar and EnerGuide logos. Also, many of these systems qualify for federal, provincial, and local grants and rebates, although you will likely need an approved energy audit before and after you install your new system. For more information on solar and earth energy systems, visit Natural Resources Canada's CanRen web site at

Continued on the following page…

www.canren.gc.ca/prod_serv/index.asp?CaId=98&PgId=564 . For more information on residential energy efficiency, major appliances, heating and cooling, home improvements, and grants and incentives, visit Natural Resources Canada's Personal Residential web site at oee.nrcan.gc.ca/residential/personal/index.cfm?attr=4

**Home remodelling and renovations.** Going 'green' when you remodel or renovate your home can save natural resources, create a more healthful living environment, and reduce your water and energy bills. Consider using greener materials, such as countertops and flooring with recycled content or made from renewable resources, and/or that give off little or no volatile organic compounds (VOCs)—chemicals identified as prime indoor air pollutants. Some of these materials may cost more, and performance varies, so research and evaluate them to try to get the best value. And, don't forget the energy and water efficient appliances mentioned above. Green building programs across Canada can provide additional information. In some cases, there are government grants available for green renovations. For a good example of a green, residential renovation project and its accomplishments, see the Greater Vancouver Regional District's Build Smart Program at www.gvrd.bc.ca/buildsmart/pdfs/greenhomefeaturesandresources2.pdf. For information on grants, visit Natural Resources Canada's Residential Home Improvement web site at oee.nrcan.gc.ca/residential/personal/home-improvement.cfm?attr=4

You will find green design and green products at the 'Residential Construction Topic Hub' of the Peaks to Prairies P2 Information Centre at peakstoprairies.org/topichub/toc.cfm?hub=31&subsec=7&nav=7. The Government of Canada's Sustainable Buildings web site also has useful information, resources and links www.sustainablebuildings.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=AE121B5F-1 as does its Green Buildings web site irc.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/sbe/green_e.html. Green Alberta (www.greenalberta.ca) is a growing online library of sustainable building materials and products, endeavouring to transform Canada's building and construction industry to a more sustainable marketplace.

**Green product sites and 'green' home calculator**

An internet search will yield many useful sites with green procurement information for homeowners. Here are just a few.

'Shop Smart Buy Green, A consumer's guide to saving money and reducing environmental impacts' in PDF format. This Australian booklet helps consumers understand the environmental impact of products by considering environmental impacts throughout a product's life cycle— manufacture, transport, use and disposal. It includes a handy checklist, toolboxes with practical tips, hints for contacting companies. Visit, www.environment.gov.au/settlements/industry/corporate/eecp/publications/pubs/consumerguide.pdf

Consumer Reports, 'Greener Choices – Products for a Better Planet', includes green buying information for appliances, cars, electronics, food and beverages, and home and garden, at www.greenerchoices.org/home.cfm .

National Geographic's 'The Green Guide' has a green home section, green buying guides, and tips and tools at www.thegreenguide.com/ .

Is there a local green shopping web site for your area? Try an internet search. One example is the 'Green Shopping Guide' for Peterborough, Ontario, at www.peterboroughreuses.com/shopping/default.asp

Ever wonder just how 'green' you are? To find out, visit, www.greenerchoices.org/calculators.cfm and use the Carbon footprint calculators.

## Green Procurement of Energy—'How green is your energy?'

Looking for greener energy? It's out there. Depending on your location, you can buy green electricity, thermal energy, and biofuel.

A good place to start when looking for green electricity is Pollution Probe's 'A Consumer Guide to Green Power in Canada' at www.pollutionprobe.org/whatwedo/greenpower/consumerguide/ontario.htm. From the drop down menu, select your Province and you will see green power purchase options, details and links. In Ontario, for example, green electricity is available from several sources.

Bullfrog Power is a retailer offering 100% Green Power to homes across Ontario, and green power certificates to businesses. Their power comes from EcoLogo-certified renewable energy sources— approximately 80% low-impact hydro and 20% wind power. Bullfrog Power's residential green electricity costs 8.9¢/kWh. For more information visit, www.bullfrogpower.com

Ontario Power Generation offers Green Power through its Evergreen Green Power marketing program for large commercial and industrial customers. The Green Power facilities are all EcoLogo-certified. Three products are offered at an average price premium of $35/MWh, with prices customized depending on the size of the customer and the timing of the purchase. For more information visit, www.opg.com/safety/sustainable/evergreen.asp

Energy Ottawa, with two EcoLogo-certified generating facilities, has a Green Power Program for commercial customers (http://www.energyottawa.com/). Oakville Hydro offers a Green Light Pact Program for residential and small business customers. Pacts (environmental attributes) are sold in 500 kWh blocks for $30 or 1,000 kWh blocks for $60 to anyone in Ontario. For more information visit, www.oakvillehydro.com/greenpower_residential.asp

Green solar-thermal energy is available in Ontario from Mondial Energy Inc., creator of Toronto's Beach Solar Laundromat. The cost is 8.5¢/thermal kWh for multi-unit residential buildings with over 100 suites, hospitals, community pools, and industrial users of hot water. Mondial pays for all the costs for commercial-scale solar systems and sells the generated energy to earn a steady return on its investment. For more information, visit www.mondial-energy.com/main.htm

The availability of green biofuels—biodegradeable fuels derived from biological sources with lower emissions than petroleum fuels—including biodiesel, depends on your location. For more information visit, the Canadian Renewable Fuels Association www.greenfuels.org/ and Biodiesel Canada www.biodiesel-canada.org/. In the Toronto area, biodiesel is available from Stoho's (1001 Queen Street East at Pape Avenue, Toronto) and from Truck Town Terminals in Milton (just off Hwy 401 at the James Snow Parkway).

Depending on your situation, you might be able to produce your own green electricity, thermal energy or biofuel. Watch for more information in a future 'Green Energy' issue of *at the source.*

## 12th Canadian Pollution Prevention Roundtable
## Edmonton, June 11th and 12th, 2008

The annual Canadian Pollution Prevention Roundtable (CPPR) provides a unique opportunity in Canada for pollution prevention (P2) leaders, decision-makers, and practitioners to exchange ideas, share expertise, and coordinate P2 efforts.

The CPPR brings together corporate, government, academic and non-profit representatives and is an important event for networking and finding out about exciting P2 initiatives in Canada.

**Themes for this year's Roundtable include:**

* Green Building and Sustainable Design
* P2 as a Strategy to Combat Climate Change
* Sustainable Packaging
* P2 Approaches in the Private Sector
* Sustainable Consumption
* Supply Chain Management
* Community Groups and P2
* Metrics
* Biomimicry
* Past P2 Award Winners
* P2 Approaches at the Institutional, Municipal and Provincial levels

Presentations will be given by representatives from Environment Canada, Alberta Environment, City of Edmonton, Norwegian Ministry of the Environment, Mountain Equipment Co-op, Alberta Research Council, One Earth Initiative, Environmental Law Centre and many others.

View the **CPPR agenda** at www.c2p2online.com/CPPR.

The **Honourable Rob Renner**, Alberta Minister of the Environment, will be starting off the event as a keynote speaker and **Severn Cullis-Suzuki** will be giving the closing keynote address.

The CPPR also features the **2008 Pollution Prevention Awards**, presented by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment, which recognize innovative businesses and organizations from across Canada showing leadership in pollution prevention.

Also, a walking tour to the **Riverside Net Zero Energy Project**, one of Alberta's first net zero energy homes, will take place on the evening of June 10th prior to the evening's **Welcoming Reception.**

Come join us! On-line registration has been activated and the agenda has been posted at www.c2p2online.com/CPPR.

**Sponsorship opportunities** are also available. Visit www.c2p2online.com/CPPR and click on 'Become a Sponsor' for details.

For additional information, please email leah@c2p2online.com or phone 416-979-3534 ext.1.

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