



**COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO
STANDARD PRACTICE**

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By

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SUBJECT

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND SERVICE LABELS

APPROVED

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PURPOSE

To identify environmental factors to be incorporated into procurement decisions; identify standards for making choices; and provide implementation guidance for environmentally preferable purchasing.

DEPARTMENTS AFFECTED

All County Agencies, Departments and Board-governed Special Districts.

DEFINITIONS

CARBON FOOTPRINT - The total set of greenhouse gas emissions caused directly or indirectly by an individual, organization or product.

ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE - Having a reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose. This comparison may take into consideration raw materials acquisition, production, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, reuse, operation, maintenance, disposal or energy efficiency, in addition to product performance, durability, safety, the needs of the purchaser and cost. This includes, but is not limited to, recyclable, recycled and reusable products.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS - The release of gases in an atmosphere that absorb and emit radiation within the thermal infrared range. This process is the fundamental cause of the greenhouse effect, thought to increase global average temperatures. The main greenhouse gases in our atmosphere are water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone.

LIFECYCLE ASSESSMENT - The comprehensive examination of a product's environmental and economic effects throughout its lifetime, including new material extraction, transportation, manufacturing, use and disposal.

LIFECYCLE COSTS - The total cost of ownership, including initial costs, energy and operational costs, longevity and efficacy of service and disposal costs.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STANDARDIZATION (ISO) - An international standard-setting body composed of representatives from various national standards organizations, to disseminate worldwide industrial and commercial standards. Its ability to set standards that often become law makes it more powerful than most non-governmental organizations. In practice, ISO acts as a consortium with strong links to governments.

PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE - A framework that guides decision makers to take anticipatory and protective measures when an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully proven. The implication is there is a moral and political responsibility to intervene and protect the public from exposure to harm if there is a plausible risk.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

1. Pollutant releases, including any hazardous substance or contaminate that is released in to the waste stream or environment
2. Toxicity or the degree to which something is poisonous
3. Waste generation, defined as the weight or volume of materials and products that enter the waste stream before recycling, composting, landfilling or combustion takes place.
4. Greenhouse gas emissions
5. Energy consumption
6. Depletion of natural resources
7. Impacts on biodiversity, or plant and animal life

PRODUCT SERVICE LABELS

Product service labels are standards or certifications available for identifying environmental product and service attributes. County employees should use product service labels when writing specifications for, or procuing materials, products, or services. Labels must have been developed in a public, transparent and broad stakeholder process; and awarded by an impartial third party.

1. EcoLogo - a Type I eco-label, as defined by the ISO, meaning that this program compares products/services with others in the same category, develops rigorous and scientifically relevant criteria that reflect the entire lifecycle of the product, and award the EcoLogo to those that are verified by an independent third party as complying with the criteria. Any product can apply for an EcoLogo certification.
2. Energy Star - Labeling program derived from a partnership between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). All products displaying the Energy Star label meet Federal Energy management program (FEMP) standards, typically products that in the top 25 percent of all similar products when ranked by energy efficiency, and generally using 25 to 50 percent less energy. Energy Star labeling is commonly found on appliances, heating and cooling equipment, home electronics, lighting and office equipment.
3. EPEAT - a system in which manufacturers declare their products conformance to a comprehensive set of environmental criteria in eight performance categories, such as elimination of environmentally sensitive materials, energy conservation and packaging. EPEAT conformance applies to desktop and laptop computers, workstations and computer monitors, for example.
4. Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) - an international, non-profit association created to coordinate the development of forest management standards, to provide public information about certification, and to work with certification organizations to promote FSC certification. FSC certification means that an independent third party has established a

chain of custody to verify that the paper originates in an FSC-certified sustainable, well-managed forest. FSC certifies wood and paper products.

5. Green Seal - an independent, non-profit organization that uses science-based standards and the power of the marketplace to create a more sustainable world. Green Seal has evaluated restaurant and food service standards, paint and other finishes, soaps and cleansers and shower products.
6. Greenguard - a third-party product certification program based on proven emissions standards and to provide specifications and resources for low-emitting products. This certification program commonly refers to construction-related products such as building materials, furnishings and finish systems.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

1. County Agencies, Departments and Special Districts will:
 - a. Ensure staff utilize product and service standards and best practices that comply with this policy;
 - b. Develop internal procedures that reference this policy, and incorporate the use of products and services that meet the intent of this policy;
 - c. Participate and collaborate with the Purchasing Department when standards and best practices are being developed, to continuously improve standards throughout the County;
 - d. Encourage testing and evaluation of environmentally friendly products;
 - e. Apply the Precautionary Principle, along with other relevant criteria, in the framework of evaluating the purchase of hazardous materials;
 - f. Ensure that written specifications comply with this policy and incorporate appropriate procurement practices;
 - g. Select products, materials and services that provide the best overall value to the County, including the use of lifecycle assessment and costs, and consideration for sustainability factors in the evaluation process; and
 - h. Gather environmental information for the purposes of tracking, reporting and evaluating the County's procurement activities.
2. The Purchasing Department will be responsible for:
 - a. Implementing this policy;
 - b. Developing standard County language for environmentally preferable procurement in solicitation document templates;

- c. Utilizing evaluation criteria that incorporates environmental factors, and aids in determining the responsibility of prospective contractors that incorporate environmentally-sensitive practices that meet the intent of this policy;
- d. Highlighting green products within countywide contracts, for easy identification and use of environmentally friendly products;
- e. Developing contractual language and forms for data collection, tracking, and reporting;
- f. Pilot testing for recommended products (Policy 11-04, SP1);
- g. Utilizing best practices in environmentally preferable procurement as they evolve;
- h. Ensuring purchasing manuals and other internal materials reference this policy;
- i. Incorporating this policy into employee training, train buyers on environmentally preferable procurement best practices that meet the intent of this policy, and develop buyer competency in communicating this policy and opportunities to departments for their solicitations;
- j. Facilitating inter-agency communication among public procurement professionals about environmentally preferable procurement practices, and leveraging buyer power when possible;
- k. Communicating to vendors and the public about this policy and County requirements;
- l. Collaborating in the collection of environmental information for the purposes of tracking and reporting the County's procurement activities and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy; and
- m. Coordinating the periodic review and update by stakeholders from the following departments, known as the *Green Team*, at least every five years.
 - Architecture and Engineering
 - Arrowhead Regional Medical Center
 - Board of Supervisors
 - County Administrative Office
 - Facilities Management
 - Fire
 - Fleet Management
 - Information Services
 - Land Use Services
 - Libraries
 - Public Works/Solid Waste Management/Transportation
 - Purchasing
 - Sheriff's Department
 - Special Districts