PROCUREMENT
PROCUREMENT POLICIES IN STATE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Rationale

Many source reduction measures can save money or provide greater service to government. In addition, source reduction can serve to make government more efficient as it reduces environmental damage and costs. Recycled product procurement is a viable form of source reduction.

Recycled products are generally competitive with virgin products in price and quality. These products are becoming more available as more manufacturers and vendors enter the marketplace and as the supply of secondary materials increases dramatically. The availability of markets for recycled products is essential to the Success of recycling and is a key element of any comprehensive approach to solid waste management and resource and energy conservation.

By working together, states and local governments can increase the use of recycled products. State and local government purchasing represents a significant percentage of the Gross National Product (GNP) and therefore can have a significant effect on the demand for secondary materials by purchasing and using recycled products. State and local agencies can influence private purchase of recycled products by setting an example through their purchases testing products, and establishing standards and specifications that can be replicated by private agencies.

Recycled product procurement policies already exist in many places. States and local governments representing over 88% of the U.S. population have established laws favoring purchases of recycled products. In addition, the federal government, whose purchases represent 7% to 8% of the GNP, is implementing Section 6002 of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, which requires agencies using federal funds to favor recycled products.

Policy

- The National Recycling Coalition recommends that public and private agencies and organizations establish programs to favor purchases of recycled products and engage in source reduction including:

- Legislative, executive and administrative commitment to buying recycled products.
- Using standard specifications definitions and minimum content standards (such as those established by EPA under RCRA or the Northeast Regional Council to allow manufacturers to make a standard product and reduce unit costs.
- Eliminating prohibitions or limitations against recycled products and including recovered material content in bid specifications.
- Requiring the highest percentage recycled content determined to be technical feasible and

available in the marketplace in all purchasing specifications.

- Identifying other government purchases that could use reusable/recycled materials.
- Requiring purchasing agents to attend workshops conducted with trade associations to educate them on the options and opportunities for recycled materials and products.
- Encouraging cooperative purchasing programs among states, local governments, regional authorities and private organizations to increase the volume of purchases and decrease unit costs.
- Providing incentives, as needed, for buying recycled products, including price preferences and life-cycle costing. Private and public sector purchasing programs should be established which give preference to recycled products including a 10 percent price preference for recycled products.
- Establishing annual goals for the purchase by federal agencies of products having recycled content The goals should increase incrementally over time.
- Establishing annually increasing goals for reducing product consumption by federal agencies, indexed to appropriate measures of their activity.
- Eliminating or reducing the S10,000 minimum purchase requirement that now applies to government purchase of each specific commodity.
- Requiring government contractors to include specifications for products having recycled content when bidding on any contracts over $1 million, as well as to use recycled products and materials in performance of the contract Also requiring these contractors to self-certify that they have used recycled material. Requiring the Defense Logistics Agency to review its procurement and product specifications for the Department of Defense and eliminating those that unfairly discriminate against the use of recycled products.
- Strengthening reporting requirements to assure that all governments procuring agencies report total annual recycled product purchasing.
- Engaging in practices or purchasing patterns that result in source reduction, such as procurement of reused, reusable, durable and repairable products.
- Fostering cooperation between vendors and users to ensure that vendors can sell recycled products and users are aware of recycled products on the market.
- Keeping good records on the recycled purchasing program to publicize the efforts and share information with other users.
- Purchasing a variety of recycled products, including products for which EPA guidelines have been established (paper. oil, tires, building insulation, concrete); products including materials being collected for recycling; products from the Official Recycled Products Guide; and other products, including but not limited to, plastic, auto parts, compost aggregate asphalt, solvents, rubber and construction materials.

Cross-reference: Legislation and Regulation; Market Development