



### **5.14.5.4 Green Purchasing Policy**

The goal of this policy is to reduce the adverse environmental impact of the college's purchasing decisions. By including environmental considerations in our purchasing decisions, along with concerns about price, performance, and availability, Century College will remain fiscally responsible while attempting to promote practices that improve public health and safety, reduce pollution, and conserve natural resources.

#### **Definition**

Environmentally preferable products and services are those that are less detrimental to the environment and human health than competing products and services. Considerations include raw materials acquisition, production, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, reuse, operation, maintenance, and final disposition of the product.

#### **Guidelines and Desired Environmental Attributes**

Century College will seek products that have reduced environmental impact because of the way they are made, used, transported, stored, packaged, and disposed. The College will seek products that do not harm human health, are less polluting and that minimize waste, maximize use of bio-based or recycled material, conserve energy and water, and reduce the consumption or disposal of hazardous materials. When determining whether a product is environmentally preferable, the following environmental attributes should be considered:

- Durable, not single use or disposable
- Made of recycled materials
- Biodegradable
- Recyclable or safely disposed of
- Made from raw materials obtained in an environmentally sound, sustainable manner
- Produced by companies with good environmental track records
- Causes minimal environmental damage during normal use or maintenance
- Carcinogen-free
- Compostable
- Energy efficient
- Heavy metal free (e.g., no lead, mercury, cadmium)
- Low-toxicity
- Made from rapidly renewable materials
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- Reduced packaging
- Resource efficiency
- Upgradeable
- Water efficient

## Considerations

The purchase of environmentally preferred items should be balanced with performance, availability, and cost. The appropriate vice president will review potential purchases if deemed necessary.

Century College is committed to buying more environmentally preferable goods and services as long as they meet our performance needs and they are available within a reasonable period of time at a reasonable cost. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as requiring a purchaser or contractor to procure products that do not perform adequately for their intended use, exclude adequate competition, or are not available at a reasonable price or in a reasonable period of time.

Whenever possible, a life cycle cost comparison will be done. The total cost of the item over the life of the item will be calculated and compared. Cost includes the initial cost along with maintenance, operating, insurance, disposal, replacement, and potential liability costs. Examining life cycle costs will save money by ensuring we are quantifying the total cost of ownership before making purchasing decisions.

Whenever possible, environmental life cycle analysis data will be considered and the extent of environmental costs will also be considered. Environmental life cycle analysis will permit attention to the environmental impacts associated with a product from the stage of acquisition of raw materials through to its eventual retirement from service and subsequent disposal, recycling, remanufacture, etc. Environmental costs data will permit attention to the economic cost associated with environmental impacts.

The determination of what is reasonable price premium to pay for an environmentally preferable product will take into consideration the environmental costs associated with the alternatives.

In all cases, the Minnesota Procurement Code will be followed and will be the primary regulator of purchases.

## Action Steps When Feasible

- Use cost/benefit analysis which will ensure that the purchase remains economically practical and satisfies the requirements of the user department.
- Revise contracts, bids, and specifications to reduce the environmental impact of purchases.
  - Include environmental criteria in bid specifications.
- Educate and involve the College community.
- Educate contractors/bidders of the College's goals for improved green purchases.
- Encourage reuse of items within the College community.
- Require Energy Star compliance where possible (<http://www.energystar.gov>) Refer to Century College's ENERGY STAR Procurement Policy.
- Identify new environmentally friendly products.
  - Student Research
  - Pilot Programs
- Purchase goods with minimal packaging that are made from recycled and recyclable materials or which can be reused.
- Source Reduction
  - Reduce waste, resulting in the purchase of fewer products.

- Purchase remanufactured products whenever practicable, both without reducing quality or effectiveness.
  - Purchase products that are durable, reusable, or refillable.
  - Request vendors eliminate or reduce packaging to the greatest extent possible.
- Purchase goods made from recycled and recyclable materials.
  - Purchase products which the U.S. EPA has established minimum recycled content standard guidelines and which contain the highest post-consumer content practicable.
    - Paper
    - Landscaping
    - Office Products
  - Lease copiers and printers that can be used with recycled content products.
- Energy
  - Purchase efficient lighting with energy-efficient equipment.
  - Purchase products with U.S. EOA Energy Star certification when practicable.
- Toxins and Pollution
  - Purchase less toxic janitorial products.
    - Follow the U.S. EPA or National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health guidelines.
  - Purchase readily biodegradable detergents that do not contain phosphates.
  - Maintain buildings and landscapes, manage pest problems through the application of prevention techniques and physical, mechanical, and biological controls.

## Products

- Recycled-content products identified by the U.S. EPA ([www.epa.gov/cpg](http://www.epa.gov/cpg))
  - Office products
    - Recycled ink and toner cartridges
  - Paper
- Energy efficient products ([www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov))
- Soybean Inks to be used in printing projects
- Cleaning products and services that are biodegradable and less hazardous
- Alternative fuel vehicles
- Landscaping products and services which are less hazardous
- Vehicular products
  - Antifreeze
  - Lubricants

## **Environmental Labeling and Certification Programs**

- Energy Star ([www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov))
- Green Seal ([www.greenseal.org](http://www.greenseal.org))
- Consumers union ([www.eco-label.org](http://www.eco-label.org))
- Environmental Choice ([www.environmentalchoice.com](http://www.environmentalchoice.com))
- Forest Stewardship Certification ([www.fscus.org](http://www.fscus.org))
- PowerSmart ([www.bchydro.com](http://www.bchydro.com))
- Scientific Certification Systems ([www.scscertified.com](http://www.scscertified.com))

## **Green Building**

Century will meet or exceed LEED silver standards or the equivalent for all new buildings and major campus renovations in accordance with MnSCU facilities standards and policy if feasible.

**References:** None

**Date Proposed:**

**Date Approved:** 4/9/2009

**Date Implemented:** 4/9/2009

**Date Last Reviewed:** Policy under review as of February 8, 2018

**Date Revised:**