



NASPO Fact Sheet: Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP)

Issue Overview: Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP), or Green Purchasing, is generally defined as purchasing a product that has a lesser or reduced negative effect or increased positive effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products that serve the same purpose³. Several factors play into the incorporation of EPP, such as the implementation of alternate packaging, distribution, reuse, operation, maintenance, disposal, acquisition, production, and procurement of goods and/or services¹.

Challenges of EPP Implementation³
Additional staff hours are needed for research products in order to plan, coordinate, and implement sustainability efforts of green purchasing programs.
Lack of knowledge in new technology, staff training, education, data reporting, and analysis.
Difficulty in tracking green purchases/balancing priorities, price performance, and environmental considerations.
Difficulty in determining manufacturing impacts of life-cycle and disposal/recycling costs.
Lack of commitment/interest from upper management and/or resistance from co-workers.
Lack of expertise in environmental issues/change “business as usual” and search for new suppliers.
Avoiding inaccurate claims (e.g. “green washing”, “eco-friendly”, “eco-safe”, “all natural, or “ozone-safe”)/confusing or conflicting information.

Advantages of EPP Implementation⁴	
Economic Benefits	Environmental/Social Benefits
Quick returns on investments due to cost savings in maintenance, operation, and disposal even when the initial purchase is more expensive.	Less toxicity produced.
Offers a good method for finding products with high price-performance ratios and improved use rates.	Minimizes energy consumption and carbon footprint.
Reduces liability for over expenditure created through dealing with hazardous work conditions.	Lessens consumption of raw materials.
Life-cycle costs can help identify and reduce hidden costs, and develop cost reduction strategies for the entire organization.	Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
Provides a competitive advantage when applying for grant funds.	Reduce water usage.
Comparable pricing for many products (e.g. lighting equipment, appliances, carpet cleaning products etc.)	Fewer employee health and safety concerns.



Ways to be Green: Follow the 3 R's (Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle)⁵

- **Reduce** means using less of a product or doing business differently when possible to reduce the amount and toxicity of trash discarded.
- **Reuse** means to repair/refurbish or find another use for something or redirect it to someone who can repair it or use it in its current state (e.g. furniture).
- **Recycle** means to reclaim, process, or disassemble for salvage and reuse something or its components that were already used for an original purpose.

Statistical Information: 2015 State Green Purchasing Profiles Survey⁶

- 55% of the 34 states participating in the survey have a “green purchasing” program.
- 47% of the 23 responding states report that their State Central Procurement offices publish reports on green purchasing initiatives.
- 56% of the 23 responding states reported having personnel designated specifically for green purchasing activities.
- 88% of the 34 responding states do include green requirements in some solicitations.
- 83% of the 24 responding states include green specifications for specific commodities and/or services.

Policy Statement/Conclusion⁷: As adopted on January 22, 2009, the NASPO Green Purchasing Policy Statement seeks to leverage the purchasing power of state and local government to conserve energy and national resources, limit environmental pollution and waste, improve public health, encourage clean technologies, and create cost savings opportunities and a balanced economy. NASPO’s effort to achieve these goals includes the development of policies, programs, and information resources that educate procurement decision makers on environmental issues and solutions.

Resources

The Green Purchasing Guide: <http://www.naspo.org/green/>

- Concepts & Benefits of Green Purchasing
- Recommendations, Steps, & Strategies for Implementation of a Green Purchasing Program
- Resources & Information on Green Purchasing

State Green Purchasing Profiles: <http://www.naspo.org/dnn/GreenMap.aspx>

- Interactive map to state navigate profiles
- Highlights activities for each state that practices green purchasing.

NASPO Webinar Series: http://www.naspo.org/green/NASPO_GPC_Webinar_Sept_2013Green_Seal.pdf

Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council: <https://www.sustainablepurchasing.org/summit15/>

Responsible Purchasing Network: <http://www.responsiblepurchasing.org/>

NASPO - RPN Fact Sheets: <http://www.naspo.org/green/#NGreenResources>



References:

¹NASPO 2014 Green Purchasing Guide: <http://www.naspo.org/green/>

²NASPO 2014 Green Purchasing Guide

³2015 NASPO State and Local Government Procurement: A Practical Guide; Chapters 6 and 22

⁴2015 NASPO State and Local Government Procurement: A Practical Guide

⁵NASPO 2014 Green Purchasing Guide

⁶NASPO Green Purchasing State Profile Survey 2015

⁷NASPO 2014 Green Purchasing Guide

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