



# **Purchasing Greener Products with Environmentally Preferable Purchasing**

Chris Newman  
US EPA Region 5



## What is Environmentally Preferable Purchasing?

“selecting products or services that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose.”

- Executive Order 13101 (September 1998)



## EPP's History

- The Pollution Prevention Act of 1990 requires EPA to "identify opportunities to use Federal procurement to encourage source reduction,"
- The EPP Program started in 1993 with Executive Order 12873
- Incorporated in the Federal Acquisition Regulations Part 23.703
  - Federal Agencies must "Maximize the utilization of environmentally preferable products and services (based on EPA-issued guidance)".



## How is EPP Different than Traditional Purchasing?

- Looks beyond what traditional purchasing decisions are based on
- Promotes social, economic or environmental objectives
- It can distinguish a company from its competition



## When does EPP Click?

- When:
  - Customers are interested in “environmentally friendly” products
  - Businesses can differentiate themselves
  - Costs are reduced
  - There’s an industry trend



## Why Should You Consider EPP?

- There are links between greener products and services and human health and the environment
- Buying greener products stimulates the market for all purchasers
- Greener purchasing can help the bottom line, and might reduce some risks
- To demonstrate how your business is addressing the environmental and social issues



## How to Pick EPP Products

- Identify specifications, standards and ecolabels
  - Purchasers aren't necessarily an expert in all the products and services they buy
  - Technical requirements change over time
  - Labels help easily identify greener products
  - There is a structure to assess the product and conformance to the standard



# EPA's Guidelines

- EPA has guidelines for assessing environmental performance standards and ecolabels for federal procurement
- The guidelines:
  - Identify the development process
  - Evaluate environmental effectiveness of the standard
  - Review conformity assessment processes
  - Management processes of the label
- <https://www.epa.gov/greenerproducts>





## ENERGY STAR®

- A voluntary partnership that helps businesses and individuals protect the environment
- The focus is on superior energy performance for homes, products, and commercial and industrial buildings.
- Builds on strong brand recognition
- Offers guidance, tools and resources at no cost
- [www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)





# WaterSense

- WaterSense labeled products:
  - Perform as well or better than their less efficient counterparts
  - Are 20 percent more water efficient than average products in that category
- It can be specified as easily as including language requiring 'Watersense' products in your purchases.
- <https://www.epa.gov/watersense>





# Sustainable Facilities Tool

- The Sustainable Facilities Tool ([www.SFTTool.gov](http://www.SFTTool.gov)) is a one stop website for all sustainability:
  - Planning
  - Designing
  - Procurement needs
- A place to learn about efficient, healthily buildings and environmentally-responsible purchasing
- Highlights best practices, case studies, and relevant regulations
- Simplify's sustainable building practices



## EPA's Sustainable Marketplace

- EPA's Sustainable Marketplace: Greener Products and Services webpage, <https://www.epa.gov/greenerproducts>, provides information to identify and purchase greener products and services.
  - Helps purchasers consider the full array of impacts associated with their supply chains
  - Throughout the entire life-cycle of the product.





## Evaluating Marketing Claims

- Look for products and services verified to meeting product standards or ecolabels that:
  - Cover the key hotspots
  - Cover the life cycle
  - Were issued or supported by organizations widely respected and trusted.
  - Are managed or recommended by EPA
  - For claims not verified by a third party certifier and/or label, make sure they meet the [Green Guides](#) requirements



# Federal Trade Commission's Green Guides

- The FTC Green Guides:
  - Help ensure that environmental terms in advertising aren't confusing
  - Provide guidelines about how unfair or deceptive acts or practices in environmental marketing claims can be pursued
  - Apply to all forms of product and service marketing to the public
  - More details at: <https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/media-resources/truth-advertising/green-guides>



## Contact Information

- Chris Newman  
US EPA Region 5  
312-353-8402  
[newman.christopherm@epa.gov](mailto:newman.christopherm@epa.gov)