

2007

CPG

COMPREHENSIVE PROCUREMENT GUIDELINES

Buy-Recycled Series

PAPER PRODUCTS

PAPER



Buying recycled products...

- ...conserves natural resources
- ...saves energy
- ...reduces solid waste
- ...reduces air and water pollutants
- ...reduces greenhouse gases
- ...creates new jobs

Twenty years ago, very little recycled-content printing and writing paper existed. Now, it is readily available, along with recycled-content newsprint, paper towels, and corrugated packaging—and at higher quality and more

competitive prices than ever before. That is in part due to government initiatives since 1988, when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued the Procurement Guideline for Paper and Paper Products Containing Recovered Materials. The 1988 paper guideline's buy-recycled requirements are now part of EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPG).

To make it easier to buy recycled, the EPA periodically updates the CPG. Through the CPG, EPA designates items that must contain recycled materials when purchased with appropriated federal funds by federal, state, and local agencies,

or by government contractors. Among these items, EPA has designated five types of paper products made from recovered materials. EPA's research shows

that the items designated in the CPG are of high quality, widely available, and cost-competitive with virgin products. EPA also issues nonregulatory companion guidance—the Recovered Materials Advisory Notice (RMAN)—that recommends levels of recycled content for these items.

Why Buy Recycled?

Recycling is more than just dropping off your cans, bottles, and newspapers at the curb or at a local collection facility. Diverting recyclables from the waste stream is only the first of three steps in the recycling process. The second step occurs when companies use these recyclables to manufacture new products. The third step comes when you purchase products made from recovered materials.

Buying recycled products results in many environmental benefits. It supports local recycling programs by creating markets for the collected materials that are processed and used to manufacture new products. This creates jobs and helps strengthen the economy; conserves natural resources; saves energy; and reduces solid waste, air and water pollutants, and greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.



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What Is CPG?

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act requires procuring agencies to buy recycled-content products designated by EPA in the CPG. Issued in May 1995, the first CPG designated 19 new products and incorporated five previously designated items (including paper and paper products) in eight product categories. Paper Products RMAN I was published in May 1996. Paper Products RMAN II, which superseded the previous Paper Products RMAN, was published in June 1998. The first CPG update (CPG II) was published in November 1997. The second CPG update (CPG III) was published in January 2000, and the third CPG update (CPG IV) was published in April 2004. The fourth CPG update (CPG V), published in September 2007, designated one new item and revised another designation. No new paper products were designated in any of the updates. For more information, visit www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/procure/about.htm.

Procuring agencies include all federal agencies, and any state or local government agencies or government contractors that use appropriated federal funds to purchase the designated items. If your agency spends more than \$10,000 per year on a product designated in the CPG, you are required to purchase it with the highest recycled-content level practicable. The CPG also applies to lease contracts covering designated

items. Executive Order (E.O.) 13423 and the Federal Acquisition Regulation also call for an increase in the federal government's use of recycled-content and environmentally preferable products.

Once any new items are designated in a published CPG update, an agency has 1 year to develop an affirmative procurement program (or revise an existing one) to include these new items. By June 22, 1989, agencies were required to develop affirmative procurement programs to incorporate buy-recycled requirements for paper and paper products. Since CPG V designates no new paper products, agencies are not required to revise this portion of their affirmative procurement program.

The CPG acknowledges that specific circumstances might arise that preclude the purchase of products made with recovered materials. Your agency may purchase designated items that do not contain recovered materials if it determines that: 1) the price of a given designated item made with recovered materials is unreasonably high; 2) there is inadequate competition (not enough sources of supply); 3) unusual and unreasonable delays would result from obtaining the item; or 4) the recycled-content item does not meet the agency's reasonable performance specifications.



How Do I Purchase Recycled-Content Paper Products?

The Paper Products RMAN II recommends recycled-content levels that you can look for when purchasing paper products, as shown in the table on page 4. Use EPA's RMAN recommendations as a starting point. The recommendations are based on market research used to identify recycled-content products that are commercially available. The RMANs also provide other purchasing guidance. Please refer to www.epa.gov/cpg/products.htm for more information on individual products.

Rather than specifying just one level of recycled content, the RMAN recommends ranges for many paper products, which reflect what is currently available in the United States. The recycled content of paper products varies; therefore, you should contact local paper mills or merchants to determine product availability. Try to purchase paper containing the highest content that is available to you.

When buying paper other than printing and writing paper, specify that you want paper "containing X percent recovered fiber, including Y percent post-consumer fiber." (For most printing and writing papers, you can simply say you are looking for 30 percent post-consumer content.)

In addition, make sure you measure recovered and post-consumer fiber content as a percentage of the weight of all fiber in the paper, not as a percentage of the total weight of the sheet. (The total weight also includes the weight of dyes, fillers, and water used in the manufacturing process.)

Access EPA's online recycled-content products database by going to www.epa.gov/cpg and selecting "Supplier Database." See the last section of this guide for other helpful resources.

Key Terms

Before buying recycled-content paper products meeting EPA's recommendations, you will need to understand some important terms.

Post-consumer fiber:

- Is the paper recovered in our homes and offices.
- Does not include newsstand returns and printers' overruns.

Recovered fiber:

- Includes scrap generated at mills after the end of the papermaking process; converting and printing scrap; newsstand returns and printers' overruns; obsolete inventory of mills, printers, and others; damaged stock; and post-consumer fiber.
- Is not waste. EPA has replaced the term waste paper used in the 1988 guidelines with recovered fiber, to acknowledge that this material is a valuable resource.
- Must be repulped. Paper cannot simply be re-cut or repackaged to count as recovered-content paper.
- Does not include forest residues such as sawdust and wood chips from forestry operations.

Mill broke:

- Is scrap generated in a mill prior to the completion of the papermaking process.
- EPA recommends that you allow mills to count the recycled-content portion of mill broke. You should not count the nonrecycled-content portion, however.



EPA's Recommended Content Levels for Paper Products

PAPER PRODUCT	NOTES	POST-CONSUMER RECOVERED FIBER	TOTAL RECOVERED FIBER
Printing and Writing Papers			
Reprographic	Business papers such as bond, electrostatic, copy, mimeo, duplicator, and reproduction	30%	30%
Offset	Used for book publishing, commercial printing, direct mail, technical documents, and manuals	30%	30%
Tablet	Office paper such as note pads and notebooks	30%	30%
Forms Bond	Bond type paper used for business forms such as continuous, cash register, sales book, unit sets, and computer printout, excluding carbonless	30%	30%
Envelope	Wove Kraft, white, and colored (including manila) Kraft, unbleached Excludes custom envelopes	30% 10–20% 10%	30% 10–20% 10%
Cotton Fiber	High-quality papers used for stationery, invitations, currency, ledgers, maps, and other specialty items	30%	30%
Text and Cover	Premium papers used for cover stock, books, stationery, and matching envelopes	30%	30%
Supercalendered	Groundwood paper used for advertising and mail order inserts, catalogs, and some magazines	10%	10%
Machine Finished Groundwood	Groundwood paper used in magazines and catalogs	10%	10%
Papeteries	Used for invitations and greeting cards	30%	30%
Check Safety	Used in the manufacture of commercial and government checks	10%	10%
Coated	Used for annual reports, posters, brochures, and magazines. Have gloss, dull, or matte finishes	10%	10%
Carbonless	Used for multiple-impact copy forms	30%	30%
File Folders	Manila or colored	30%	30%
Dyed Filing Products	Used for multicolored hanging folders and wallet files	20%	20–50%
Index and Card Stock	Used for index cards and postcards	20%	50%
Pressboard	High-strength paperboard used in binders and report covers	20%	50%
Tags and Tickets	Used for toll and lottery tickets, licences, and identification and tabulating cards	20%	20–50%



PAPER PRODUCT	NOTES	POST-CONSUMER RECOVERED FIBER	TOTAL RECOVERED FIBER
Newsprint			
Newsprint	Groundwood paper used in newspaper	20–85%	20–100%
Commercial Sanitary Tissue Products			
Bathroom Tissue	Used in rolls or sheets	20–60%	20–100%
Paper Towels	Used in rolls or sheets	40–60%	40–100%
Paper Napkins	Used in food service applications	30–60%	30–100%
Facial Tissue	Used for personal care	10–15%	10–100%
General-purpose Industrial Wipers	Used in cleaning and wiping applications	40%	40–100%
Paperboard and Packaging Products			
Corrugated Containers	Used for packaging and shipping a variety of goods (<300 psi) (300 psi)	25–50% 25–30%	25–50% 25–30%
Solid Fiber Boxes	Used for specialized packaging needs such as dynamite packaging and army ration boxes	40%	40%
Folding Cartons	Used to package a wide variety of foods, household products, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, detergent, and hardware	40–80%	100%
Industrial Paperboard	Used to create tubes, cores, cans, and drums	45–100%	100%
Miscellaneous	Includes “chipboard” pad backings, book covers, covered binders, mailing tubes, game boards, and puzzles	75–100%	90–100%
Padded Mailers	Made from Kraft paper that is usually brown but can be bleached white	5–15%	5–15%
Carrierboard	A type of folding carton designed for multipack beverage cartons	10–15%	10–100%
Brown Papers	Used for bags and wrapping paper	5–20%	5–40%
Miscellaneous Paper Products			
Tray Liners	Used to line food service trays. Often contain printed information	50–75%	100%

Paper Buying Tips

To make it even easier to buy recycled-content paper products, EPA offers the following purchasing tips for the various paper product categories outlined in the RMAN. Printing and writing papers comprise one of the largest categories of paper and paper products. Examples include stationery, computer printout paper, note pads, copier paper, and offset paper. Printing and writing papers can be uncoated or coated. When buying printing and writing paper, remember to:

- Work with your printer. Different papers exhibit differences in performance and printability. Some printers might first want to test certain papers with a particular ink. Printers also can help you select papers based on how they will be used (i.e., whether they will be folded, die-cut, or made into self-mailers).
- Work with your graphic designer. Some papers are better than others for certain design needs. Make sure both the designer and printer agree that the paper you choose will meet your expectations.
- Consider the environmental ramifications of your purchasing decisions. Papers with certain characteristics, such as deep colors, coatings, or groundwood content, might not be recyclable in your existing office paper recycling program or might require changes to the program. Consider the effects of your paper purchases before deciding to purchase a specific paper.

Newsprint is a type of groundwood paper generally used to print newspapers. Recycled-content newsprint is usually manufactured from fiber recovered from old newspapers and magazines. The federal government uses newsprint for printing the *Federal Register* (FR), Congressional Record, and other publications.

When purchasing newsprint, consider these helpful hints:

- Pay attention to newsprint's basis weight. Basis weight is the weight in pounds of a ream of paper cut to a specified size. Different weights hold up better in different presses. Recycled-content newsprint ranging from 25 to 32 pounds generally performs well. The U.S. Government Printing Office specifies 28 pound recycled-content newsprint.
- Consider your requirements for the newsprint you are buying. Recycled-content newsprint manufacturers are making products that meet

their clients' performance requirements (e.g., print-ability, brightness, cleanliness, and opacity).

- Determine whether newsprint is recyclable in your existing recycling program. Some office paper recycling programs do not accept groundwood papers such as newsprint; find out whether yours does before you buy newsprint. Sanitary tissue products include bathroom and facial tissue, paper towels, napkins, and general-purpose industrial wipers.

When purchasing these products, remember these tips:

- Avoid misconceptions about softness, absorbency, and strength. Some recycled-content sanitary tissue products are softer, stronger, and more absorbent than others. Consider your aesthetic and functional requirements for tissue products before purchasing a specific product.
- Remember to review your janitorial supply contracts because commercial tissue products often are purchased through contractors. Make sure your supply contracts specify recycled-content, not virgin, products.
- When changing brands, consider other factors that could influence your purchasing decision. When switching from sheet to roll paper towels, for example, you might incur costs to replace dispensers or fixtures if such costs are not borne by the supplier.

Paperboard and packaging is a broad category of paper products that includes corrugated containers, folding cartons, book and report covers, mailing tubes, video cassette boxes, paper bags, and wrapping paper. They can be manufactured with a wide variety of recovered fibers including old newspapers, old corrugated containers, mixed papers, and sorted white office paper. In fact, paperboard mills use more recovered fiber than any other segment of the paper industry.

When purchasing recycled-content paperboard and packaging, consider these tips:

- Remember, you can print on recycled boxes, not just on virgin, bleached boxes.
- Be aware that you can use recycled boxes in food applications and still meet U.S. Food and Drug Administration requirements.



How Can I Get More Information?

This resource guide and the following resources on buying recycled-content products can be accessed on the Internet.



Information Available From EPA

- **The CPG:** <www.epa.gov/cpg>. This site describes EPA's effort to facilitate the procurement of products containing recovered materials, including information on CPG and RMANs, and an online database of manufacturers and suppliers of designated items.
- **EPA CPG Program:** <www.epa.gov/cpg/pdf/cpgfs.pdf>. This resource guide provides general information about the CPG and the development of affirmative procurement programs.
- **Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP):** <www.epa.gov/epp>. EPA's EPP program encourages and assists federal agencies in purchasing environmentally preferable products and services. The site explains EPA's proposed guiding principles for including environmental performance in purchasing decision-making, and posts case studies of successful pilot projects in both the public and private sectors.
- **Jobs Through Recycling:** <www.epa.gov/jtr>. EPA's Jobs Through Recycling program stimulates economic growth and recycling market development by assisting businesses and supporting a network of state and regional recycling contacts. This Web site provides information on financing and technical assistance for recycling businesses, as well as other market development tools.
- **Municipal Solid Waste:** <www.epa.gov/msw>. This site includes information on recycling, source reduction, and reuse. It contains state municipal solid waste data and the latest facts and figures on waste generation and disposal.

- **WasteWise:** <www.epa.gov/wastewise>. WasteWise is a free, voluntary EPA program through which organizations eliminate costly municipal solid waste, benefitting their bottom line and the environment. The program provides hands-on assistance to members to help them purchase or manufacture recycled-content products, prevent waste, and recycle solid waste materials.

- **Federal Register (FR):** <www.epa.gov/cpg/backgrnd.htm> and <www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/procure/about.htm>. Notices promulgating CPG I (60 FR 21370) and RMAN I (60 FR 21386), May 1, 1995, and Paper Products RMAN I (60 FR 26986), May 29, 1996. FR notices promulgating CPG II (62 FR 60961) and RMAN II (62 FR 60975), November 13, 1997, and Paper Products RMAN II (63 FR 31214), June 8, 1998. FR notices promulgating CPG III (65 FR 3070) and RMAN III (65 FR 3082), January 19, 2000. FR notices promulgating CPG IV (69 FR 24028) and RMAN IV (69 FR 24039), April 30, 2004. FR notices promulgating CPG V (72 FR 52475) and RMAN V (72 FR 52561), September 14, 2007.



Other Government Sources

- **U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Environmental Products Overview:** <www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/channelView.do?pageTypeId=8207&channelPage=/ep/channel/gsaOverview.jsp&channelId=-12972>. GSA offers a variety of environmental products and services to its federal customers to assist them in their efforts to comply with procurement responsibilities outlined in federal environmental laws and regulations. This overview contains information about environmentally oriented products and services in the Federal Supply Service Supply System. To access GSA Advantage!, GSA's Internet-based ordering system, and order any GSA product, visit <www.gsaadvantage.gov>.



- **Environmental Products Guide:** <www.gsa.gov/Portal/gsa/ep/home.do?tabId=2>. This guide features more than 1,500 paper and paper products containing recovered materials.

■ **Office of the Federal Environmental Executive (OFEE):** <www.ofee.gov>. OFEE’s mission is to advocate, coordinate, and assist environmental efforts of the federal community in waste prevention, recycling, affirmative procurement of CPG items, and the acquisition of recycled and environmentally preferable products and services.

- **Greening the Government: A Guide to Implementing E.O. 13101:** <<http://ofee.gov/eo/greening.pdf>>. This guide provides detailed information on the requirements of E.O. 13101, which established a process for amending the CPG and issuing RMANs. E.O. 13101 preceded E.O. 13423 and established many requirements and definitions that are still in effect. Updated in February 2001, the E.O. is available from OFEE at <www.ofee.gov>.

- **Executive Order 13423: Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management:** <http://ofee.gov/eo/eo13423_main.asp>. Published in January 2007, this Order replaced E.O. 13101 and requires federal agencies to purchase green products and services, including recycled-content products, energy- and water-efficient products, biobased products, and environmentally preferable products and services. Although E.O. 13423 revoked E.O. 13101, EPA continues to follow certain procedures of E.O. 13101 since they are consistent with the requirements of RCRA 6002 (e).

- **Federal Green Purchasing Program:** <www.ofee.gov/gp/gp.asp>. This program assists federal agencies to promote the acquisition of recycled content, environmentally preferable, and biobased products; non-ozone depleting substances; and products containing alternatives to certain priority chemicals. Training tools and other green purchasing guidance are available.

■ **U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO):** <www.access.gpo.gov/qualitycontrol/paperspecs/index.html>. GPO provides a variety of recycled-content printing papers to federal agencies. View federal government paper specification standards.

■ **The Official Recycled Products Guide:** <www.dep.state.pa.us/wm_apps/recycledproducts/>. This directory lists more than 5,000 manufacturers and distributors of recycled-content products.

■ **California Recycled-Content Product Database:** <www.ciwmb.ca.gov/RCP>. This site contains information on reasons for buying recycled-content products, and how to procure them, and provides access to a database with information on products, as well as manufacturers, distributors, reprocessors, mills, and converters across the country who procure or produce these products.



Additional Sources

■ **Buy Recycled Business Alliance:** <www.nrc-recycle.org>. The Alliance includes over 3,200 companies and organizations committed to increasing the use of recycled-content products and materials in their day-to-day operations. The Alliance offers educational materials, a quarterly newsletter, and product-specific guides. Public purchasing entities can join for free.

