

## Buy Green

Both Congress and the President directed Federal agencies to be good stewards of the environment by conserving energy and other precious natural resources. One way that we can be good stewards is to buy products and services that conserve resources. This is generally referred to as “green” purchasing. When you use your purchase card to buy “green” products, you and your agency are helping to perform the mission in a cost-effective manner, enhancing energy security, creating markets, increasing worker safety, and promoting environmental stewardship.

There are six components to the Federal green purchasing program:

- Recycled content products
- Energy Star and FEMP-designated energy efficient products, low standby power devices, and renewable energy
- Biobased products
- Alternative fuel vehicles/alternative fuels
- Environmentally preferable products and services
- Non-ozone depleting substances

Of these, all but alternative fuel vehicles, alternative fuels, and renewable energy can be purchased with your purchase card. The purchase of these products is required by law or executive order unless the products do not meet your performance needs, are not reasonably available, or are only available at an unreasonable price. All of these products are commercially available off-the-shelf items and are available through GSA stock and schedule programs, the Defense Logistics Agency, mandatory sources such as the National Industries for the Blind, and commercial open market sources.

### 1. **Buying recycled content products**

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act requires the purchase of recycled content products designated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These products are also known as Comprehensive Procurement Guideline or CPG items; the CPG is EPA’s list of designated products. The EPA maintains a list of designated recycled-content products and recommends recycled-content levels that you should use when buying these products. Examples of recycled content products typically purchased with purchase cards are recycled content copier paper and other office paper products, notebook binders, and remanufactured toner

cartridges. Refer to [www.epa.gov/cpg](http://www.epa.gov/cpg) for the list of products, EPA's recommendations, and additional information.

## **2. Buying energy efficient products**

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 requires agencies purchasing energy consuming equipment to purchase Energy Star products or energy-efficient products designated by the Department of Energy's Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP). "Energy efficient" includes products in the top 25th percentile of efficiency and standby power devices. Energy efficient products typically purchased with a purchase card include desktop computers, laptops, and small appliances. Presidential Executive Order 13221, "Energy- Efficient Standby Power Devices" requires you to buy products that use minimal standby power. Additionally, agencies participating in the Federal Electronics Challenge have committed to purchasing equipment registered to the Electronic Products Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) standards. Both the Energy Star program and FEMP have websites identifying energy efficient products and guidance for purchasing these products. FEMP also has established a StandBy Power Device Product Listing with information on such products as computers, fax machines and printers. Refer to <http://www.energystar.gov> and <http://www.eere.energy.gov/femp/procurement/> for efficiency recommendations, cost-effectiveness examples, buyer tips, product sources, and for additional information and to <http://www.federalelectronicchallenge.net/resources/aquisit.htm> for additional information about EPEAT-registered products

## **3. Buying biobased products**

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 requires the purchase of biobased products designated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). These products are typically made from feedstocks derived from farm crops and farm residues, but can also contain wood byproducts. USDA began designating biobased products in 2005 and ultimately may designate more than 100 products. Examples of biobased products typically purchased with purchase cards are various types of lubricants and greases, office and bathroom cleaning products, and hand soaps and other personal cleaning products. Refer to <http://www.biopreferred.gov/> for the list of designated products, USDA's recommendations, and additional information.

#### **4. Buying environmentally preferable products**

Presidential Executive Order 13101, "Greening the Government Through Waste Prevention, Recycling, and Federal Acquisition" emphasizes the significance of purchasing environmentally preferable (EPP) products. These products can be viable alternatives to products that contain hazardous materials or toxic chemicals, such as green cleaning products or mercury-free thermometers. They also can have multiple attributes, such as a printer that is energy efficient, prints two-sided, and uses recycled content copier paper and remanufactured toner cartridges. To date, agencies have conducted more than 30 EPP projects that range from renovation of the Pentagon parking lot and building construction to acquisition of janitorial products or services. Agencies are encouraged to purchase green cleaning products. Refer to <http://www.epa.gov/epp/index.htm> for summaries of the pilot projects, sample contract language, standards information, product sources, and additional information. Refer to <http://ofee.gov/gp/gp.asp> for more information about green cleaning products and other environmentally preferable products and services.

#### **5. Buying non-ozone depleting substances**

Although we have been very successful in reducing releases of ozone-depleting substances (ODSs), the ozone hole over the Antarctic is still huge. EPA identifies alternatives to ODSs through its Significant New Alternatives Policy (SNAP) program and provides recommendations for specific products, such as refrigerants and fire extinguishers. Refer to [www.epa.gov/ozone/snap/lists/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/ozone/snap/lists/index.html) for the list of products and alternatives.

For more information on using your purchase card to buy "green" products, please contact Ms. Dana Arnold at [arnold.dana@ofee.gov](mailto:arnold.dana@ofee.gov) or visit <http://ofee.gov/gp/gp.asp>.

GSA SmartPay® Purchase Card  
Your Blueprint for Success

I certify that I reviewed and understand the above information to effectively support the USDA Purchase Card Program.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_