



**Subject: Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy**

Responsible Department: General Services

February 3, 2017

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**Purpose:** The primary purpose of this policy is to minimize negative environmental impacts of the County’s activities by ensuring the procurement of services and products that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing goods or services that serve the same purpose, and may:

- reduce toxicity;
- conserve natural resources, materials, and energy;
- maximize recyclability and recycled content.

A collateral purpose is to support markets for recycled goods and other environmentally preferable products and services.

**Policy:** The County of Santa Barbara commits to:

1. Procure environmentally preferable products and services when available and where criteria have been established by governmental or other widely recognized authorities (e.g. Energy Star, EPA Eco Purchasing Guidelines).
2. Integrate environmental factors into the County’s buying decisions when available and where external authorities have not established criteria. Examples that the County may implement include:
  - a. replacing disposables with reusable or recyclables;

- b. supporting eco-labelling practices by buying products bearing such labels in preference to others, where they are available and provide value for money;
  - c. taking into account life cycle costs and benefits; and
  - d. evaluating, as appropriate, the environmental performance of vendors in providing products and services;
3. Raise staff awareness on the environmental issues affecting procurement by providing relevant information and training.
4. Encourage suppliers and contractors to offer environmentally preferable products and services at competitive prices.
5. Encourage providers of services to consider environmental impacts of service delivery.
6. Comply with environmental legislative and regulatory requirements in the procurement of products and services.
7. Nothing in this policy should be construed as requiring the purchase of products, nor requiring a County department or contractor to procure products that do not perform adequately for their intended use or are not available at a reasonable cost within a reasonable period of time.
8. Procedures and Guidelines may be established as necessary to ensure the continuation of a strong Environmental Procurement Program.
9. Santa Barbara County may require contractors and consultants to use recycled and other environmentally preferable products whenever practicable.

**Procedures:**

1. Develop and maintain information about environmentally preferable products and recycled products containing the maximum practicable amount of recycled materials, to be purchased by departments, consultants and contractors whenever possible.
2. Inform departments, and contractors of their responsibilities under this policy and provide implementation assistance.
3. Require the use of recycled materials and recycled products by incorporating them in bid specifications where practicable;
4. Disseminate information on recycled and environmentally preferable product procurement requirements, specifications, and performance to assist vendors with procurement opportunities with the County.
5. Establish guidelines governing the review and approval of specifications for the procurement of selected materials based on considerations of recycling, energy and water conservation, life cycle costing and other environmental considerations.

Approved for Distribution by *Janette D Pell*  
Director, General Services