Non-toxic Procurement Policies: A Roadmap for Action

Rebecca Meuninck, Ph.D.
Deputy Director

ECOLOGYCENTER
Healthy People, Healthy Planet
Sustainable Procurement Policies Roadmap

Sustainable Procurement Roadmap

Step 1: Foundation Building
Step 2: Creating an EPP
Step 3: Implementing an EPP
Step 4: Training, Goal Setting and Measuring Impact
Foundation Building

STEP 1. Foundation Building

Audience: Sustainability Professionals, Environmental Advocates, Community Members and Leaders

Increasing your understanding of public procurement
Public procurement is a distinct field of professional practice. A basic understanding of processes, terms, and organizations will increase your ability to successfully work with procurement professionals in your local or state government to help build a strong environmentally preferable procurement policy. In this section, we will provide you basic information on public procurement so that you can successfully engage with procurement professionals.

STEP 1 RESOURCES

Cooperative Purchasing Organizations

Cooperative purchasing organizations help develop and administer cooperative contracts used by state and local governments, public school districts and universities, special districts (e.g., fire, sewer, water), as well as nonprofits.

There are many benefits to cooperative contracting. Collectively, states are able to leverage their spending through a single solicitation that obtains best value pricing and superior contract terms. Cooperative purchasing organizations emphasize that they help governments get the best value from contractors considering price, quality, reliability, warranties, and service while protecting the government’s interests with favorable terms and conditions.

The two most prominent cooperative purchasing organizations for the public sector are the National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO)

Resources Available
- Cooperative Purchasing Organizations
- Sustainable Purchasing Organizations & Networks
- Third Party Certifications
- Sustainable Purchasing 101
Creating an EPP

STEP 2. Creating an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy

*Audience: Procurement Professionals, Sustainability Professionals, Environmental Advocates, Community Members and Leaders*

A robust sustainable procurement policy will serve as the foundation for state or local governments taking action on safer chemicals, climate change, social equity, etc. through their purchasing decisions. Having a statutory or administrative policy means that there is more accountability and resources available for implementation. Our focus is on safer chemicals and products, but a good sustainable procurement policy will address a comprehensive set of environmental, social, and governance topics.

**STEP 2 RESOURCES**

**Model Sustainable Purchasing Guides and Toolkits**

A number of organizations have created model toolkits or guides to help you develop a excellent sustainable procurement policy. NASPO's Green Purchasing Guide and USDN and RPN's Sustainable Procurement Playbook for Cities are a great place to start learning more about developing your policy.

**Resources Available**

- Model Purchasing Guides and Toolkits for Policy creation
- Model City and State Policies
- Webinars on Model Policies
Implementing an EPP

STEP 3. Implementing an Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy

Audience: Procurement Professionals, Sustainability Professionals, Environmental Advocates, Community Members and Leaders

Focus: Addressing priority products and chemicals of concern
Securing some near-term sustainable procurement wins will help create momentum and demonstrate value. There are a variety of options for low-hanging fruit related to safer chemicals and products. Our focus is on making it as easy as possible for procurement staff to address the issue by providing ready to use contract language and specifications. A number of these example specification also cover issues related to recycled content, energy use reduction, and zero waste goal.

Procurement Guides & Specifications

- Building Products, Flooring, and More
  
  Healthy Building Network’s HomeFree Database
  HomeFree raises awareness of toxic building materials and their associated health hazards. The database can help you make informed decisions to procure less toxic building products.

Resources Available
- Procurement Guides and Specifications
  - Building Products, flooring, and more.
  - Childcare
  - Cleaning Products
  - Electronics
  - Food Service
  - Furniture
  - Pest management
  - Product Packaging
  - Sources for multiple specs.
Training, Goal Setting and Measuring Impact

STEP 4. Training, Goal Setting, and Measuring Impact

**Audience:** Procurement Professionals, Sustainability Professionals, Environmental Advocates

*Building organizational capacity for lasting change*
Staff training and public reporting represent two key elements necessary for ensuring that the change we've worked hard to create lasts for the long term. Staff training is critical for building organizational capacity over time and expanding implementation more broadly. Public reporting is important for supporting transparency and accountability.

**STEP 4 RESOURCES**

*Webinar-based training about sustainable procurement*
A number of organizations offer excellent webinar-based training on developing and implementing sustainable procurement policies. Visit these organizations’ websites for their webinars. Some organizations offer webinars at no cost to the public, while others provide an even wider selection to their members.

**Responsible Purchasing Network Webinars**
**Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council Webinars**
**NASPO Green Purchasing Webinar YouTube Channel**

**Resources Available**
- Webinar Based Training Programs.
- Tools for measuring impact and examples of evaluation from other cities and states
What’s Next?

- Technical Assistance in Policy Development and Implementation for local and state governments
  * On the ground help in several states
- Ongoing updates and improvements to the Roadmap
- Metrics and goals development for non-toxic EPPs
- Interactive training module on implementing an EPP coming Summer 2020
THANK YOU!

Contact:
Rebecca Meuninck
734-369-9278
Rebecca@ecocenter.org

https://www.ecocenter.org/sustainable-procurement-policies-roadmap
Firefighting Foam

Aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF)

- Synthetic class B foam used to extinguish flammable liquids (i.e. gasoline, oil, and jet fuel)
- Contains PFAS (PFOA and PFOS)

Alternative: Fluorine-free, non-persistent foams (F3)

- Firefighting efficiency and cost comparable to AFFF
- Similar cost
- No contaminated water to treat
- Can bio-degrade
Furniture

Hexavalent Chromium - Chrome plating or colors

PFAS – Water and stain proofing chemicals

VOCs – Adhesives and coatings, like formaldehyde

Antimicrobials – Chemicals in furniture fabrics and surfaces

Heavy Metals – Flame retardants and protective finishes like antimony, lead, mercury, and cadmium

Flame Retardants – Chemicals in plastics, textiles, and coatings

Phthalates – Make cushions and upholstery flexible

PVCs – Additives for flexibility and resistance to heat and UV light

www.ecocenter.org
Furniture – Resources

• Healthier Buildings Guide - [bit.ly/2PDhTWh](bit.ly/2PDhTWh)
• Healthier Hospitals Guidance for Healthy Interiors - [bit.ly/38TCFbX](bit.ly/38TCFbX)
• NASPO Guide for Environmentally Preferable Furniture - [bit.ly/36Vo2mS](bit.ly/36Vo2mS)
• **PFAS (PFOA and PFOS):** molded recycled paper; coated bowls or plates; food trays; take-out containers; pizza or pastry boxes; wrappers and liners

• **Phthalates:** paper/foil/plastic laminate beverage carton; foil-lined pouch; cling film; paper and board-packaging material; printing inks and adhesives; PVC gloves

• **Alternatives:** making paper and paperboard grease-resistant by compressing fibers; uncoated paper plates; polylactic acid (PLA) compostable plastic made from corn; bamboo; palm leaves; clay coatings; Bio-Wax; reusables, compostables, and recyclables
Foodware - Resources

Flooring

PFAS (PFOA and PFOS): stain-resistant polymers, water repellent, stain blocker; also found in floor wax

Phthalates: plasticizer in PVC backing, UV absorber

Flame Retardants: polyurethane and latex backings

Heavy Metals: PVC backing, arsenic, mercury, lead, and formaldehyde in PVC backing and dye fixing agents

Alternatives: natural fibers, wool, latex or jute backing, hemp, cotton, undyed, no flame retardants or treatment chemicals, seagrass, sisal, natural rubber padding; Look for The Carpet and Rug Institute's (CRI) Green Label Plus or Greenguard-certified

www.ecocenter.org
Flooring - Resources