

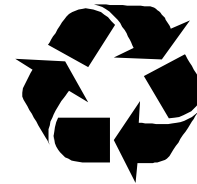


Just the Facts...

Affirmative Procurement The Federal Government's Buy Recycled Requirements

1. What is Affirmative Procurement (AP)? AP is the policy and practice of purchasing products made with recycled materials instead of buying competing products without that attribute.

2. Why buy recycled-content products? There are many reasons to buy recycled!



- *Compliance.* The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) directed Federal agencies to develop AP programs. Since then, Executive Order (EO) 12873, EO 13101, and the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FARs) all require AP programs to be instituted at Federal facilities.

- *Closing the Circle.* Many of us practice recycling at work and at home. When we buy recycled-content products, we are strengthening recycling programs and “closing the circle.” By purchasing the items, we create more demand for recycled products and help improve technology to create higher quality recycled-content products.

- *Environmental Benefits.* Practicing AP creates recycling markets, conserves resources, saves energy, saves landfill space, and reduces pollution.

3. Who has to buy recycled-content products? Federal agencies such as DoD are required to have AP programs for the EPA-designated items for which the agency spends more than \$10,000 annually. DoD, as a whole, spends at least that amount on all of the designated items. In other words, if you are spending appropriated funds, you must consider recycled content in your purchasing decision. This also applies to contractors spending Federal dollars.

4. What are designated items? EPA provides lists of designated items in its Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPGs). The CPG items fall into 8 product categories:

- 5. What if the recycled-content product is inferior or costs too much?** The AP guidelines make allowances so that the requirements of the user can be met. There are three instances where recycled-content products need not be purchased over competing products. These are when the:
- Price of the recycled-content product is prohibitive
 - Performance of the recycled-content product is shown to be inadequate for intended use
 - Product is not available within the timeframe required by the user
- 6. Where can I find recycled-content products?** You can find these items in the places you have traditionally ordered from, such as General Services Administration (GSA), Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) and the Government Printing Office (GPO). You should also:
- Specify recycled-content products in your contract specifications
 - Remove all references to virgin materials in contract specifications and purchase requests
 - Check all product descriptions for recycled-content information
 - Incorporate appropriate FAR clauses into contracts
 - Ask vendors to supply recycled-content information
- 7. We have so many government credit card holders. How will they know to follow AP requirements?** The best way to ensure that credit card holders follow AP requirements is to provide awareness training. This can take place when the card is issued or by arranging training at your facility. Refresher training is also recommended, since the EPA is constantly adding to the list of CPG items. The USACHPPM provides half-day, onsite training seminars for AP and environmentally preferable purchasing. And not only credit card holders need this training – procurement, contracting, environmental, logistics, and product users should attend as well!
- 8. Where can I get more information?** For more information, AP requirements or to sign up for an AP seminar at your facility, contact:

Pat Rippey, Seminar Coordinator
DSN 584-5201, commercial (410) 436-5201