



Green Purchasing Guidelines | 2024

At the Forest Preserves, we are committed to putting sustainability at the forefront of our operations. Our Green Purchasing Guidelines serve as a framework for reducing our environmental impact by maximizing the procurement of eco-friendly products. We understand that every purchasing decision carries the potential to either contribute to environmental degradation or to foster a more sustainable future. Join us as we pave the way towards a greener, more environmentally conscious future through our dedication to green purchasing.

Purchasing Checklist To purchase eco-friendly products:

Required

- ✓ Are not single-use plastics (except for health emergencies or disability needs)
 - ✓ Are not a plastic water bottles, plastic bags (grocery bags, produce bags), plastic straws, disposable plastic utensils (forks, knives, spoons), plastic food packaging (wrappers, containers), plastic cutlery, cups, plates, plastic stirrers, plastic cotton swabs with plastic stems.
 - ✓ Are not containers, bowls, straws, plates, trays, cartons, cups, lids, forks, spoons, knives, and other items that are designed for one-time use for beverages, prepared food, or leftovers from meals and that are made of plastic, are not compostable, and are not accepted in residential curbside recycling pick up.

Best Practice

- ✓ Sourced locally from credible and certified businesses.
- ✓ Considered energy-efficient, water-efficient, bio-based, environmentally preferable, non-ozone depleting, contain recycled content, and/or non-toxic or less-toxic alternatives.
- ✓ Considered certifications for green products and has a standardized eco-label identifying products made from 100% biodegradable, compostable, or post-consumer recycled content and those that do not include caustic or toxic chemicals.
- ✓ Is an ethical product that supports quality working conditions, worker health and safety, and community prosperity; that is not harmful to human or public health (ex: PFAS, ozone-depleting substances)
- ✓ Is an efficient product that conserves natural resources and limits waste.
- ✓ Avoid plastic and polystyrene products whenever possible as many plastics are non-recyclable and can break down into microplastics.
- ✓ Used vendor website toggle search options to identify green options.
- ✓ Searched the [Product Supplier Directory](#) for recycled items.
 - ✓ Applied [recycled-content recommendations](#) (for paper products)
- ✓ Thought ahead and have a plan for how to manage the disposal of products.

Look for These words: Biodegradable | Compostable | Made from recycled material | Organic | Efficient | Non-toxic | Reusable | Recyclable

Reach out to sustainabilityFPCC@cookcountyil.gov with questions, feedback, suggestions for improvements, and support with these guidelines



Additional Tips:

- ✓ **Research & Ask Colleagues:** Look up brands and ask around about commitments to sustainability.
- ✓ **Check Packaging:** Opt for products with minimal or eco-friendly packaging.
- ✓ **Read Reviews:** Look for reviews on the eco-friendliness and effectiveness of the products.
- ✓ **Local Products:** Whenever possible, buy local products to reduce the carbon footprint associated with transportation.

Vendor Information

Staples: [Sustainability Center](#), [shop Sustainable Staples brands with Eco-ID™ Program](#)

Office Depot: [Buying Green Guide](#) and their [GreenerOffice™ selections](#)

Amazon: [Climate Friendly Pledge Store](#) and Filter

Grainger: Toggle an “Environmentally Preferable” filter to see only green or environmentally friendly products.

- [Grainger Customer Sustainability Solutions](#)
 - This website summarizes sustainability solutions for customers that cover air, water, waste, and energy. We offer products, services, and consultant services to help customers reach sustainability goals.

Food Ware Non-Single Use Plastic Products: [Eco Promotional](#) | [EarthClusive](#)

Zero Waste Restaurants: [Sustainable Restaurants](#) | [Let's Shedd Plastic Restaurant Partners](#)

Certifications Look for These Labels to identify products and services.

- ✓ EPA Certifications ✓ Fair Trade Certified ✓ Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certified
- ✓ B-Corp ✓ Green Seal ✓ USDA Organic

Safer Choice		Cleaning and other products that perform well, are cost-effective and are safer for the environment.
WaterSense		Save water with a product label and provides tips for saving water around the house.
SmartWay		Transport partners and products (fuel-efficient products and services).
ENERGY STAR		Save power with ENERGY STAR® and other energy-efficient products.
EPEAT		Registered electronic products, help reduce toxins and protect health.

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[Find Other Non-EPA Certifications:](#)

There are over 460 standards and ecolabels in the marketplace claiming to help purchasers identify and procure more sustainable products and services. EPA manages the [Recommendations of Specifications, Standards, and Ecolabels](#) which includes over 40 private sector standards/ecolabels/certifications across 30 purchase categories.

Use Case: I am looking to purchase a parts wash solution for the machine shop. I go to that site, filter by product or service category, and learn that there are three standards I can look for: Ecologo, Green Seal, and Safer Choice.

Greenwashing

It's important to be aware that some companies or organizations will sometimes make inaccurate claims that make their products or services seem more environmentally preferable than they are. This process is known as 'greenwashing'. To better navigate the marketplace, look for credible [ecolabels and standards](#) and ensure all claims are verified by a third-party certifier or meet the [Federal Trade Commission's Guides to the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims](#) (Green Guides). More information: [Using Ecolabels to Enable Impactful Sustainable Procurement Webinar \(youtube.com\)](#).

FPCC Policies and Ordinances

Single Use Plastics

- Limit the procurement of single-use plastics (except for health emergencies or disability needs) while encouraging the purchase of biodegradable and reusable alternatives to plastic and supporting vendors and concessionaires to limit the use of single-use plastics.¹

Water Bottle Ban

- No Forest Preserve District department shall purchase single-serving bottles of water using District funds.²
- This prohibition shall not apply in the following instances:
 - Supplemental bottled water purchased for the health and safety of District patrons and/or employees; and
 - Water in containers made from plant-based materials or recyclable aluminum cans.

¹ [Forest Preserve District of Cook County - File #: 24-0209 \(legistar.com\)](#)

² [Forest Preserve District of Cook County - File #: 19-0345 \(legistar.com\)](#)



Expert Resources

Go Deeper: Product Searches to Find the Green Choice

- **[Comprehensive Procurement Guideline Product Supplier Directory](#)** (EPA)
 - The CPG Product Supplier Directory includes manufacturers, vendors, and suppliers for each product so you can use it to search for specific companies and products.

Use Case: I am looking for latex paint. I go to the directory and find a company in Grayslake, IL that provides 100% post-consumer paint in 11 colors.

- **[SFTool - Sustainable Facilities Tool - GSA Sustainable Facilities Tool](#)**
 - The Sustainable Facilities Tool offers sustainable guidance and tools.
 - [Product Search | SFTool \(ecomedes.com\)](#)

Use case: I need a pool pump; I search for and find the product with an EnergyStar certification and then can this product to a project and produce Federal Guidelines and/or LEED documentation.

- **[Lists of substitutes for ozone-depleting substances](#)** (EPA)
 - **[Unacceptable and Acceptable Substitutes Tables](#)**
 - [Adhesives, Coatings, and Inks](#)
 - [Aerosols](#)
 - [Cleaning Solvents](#)
 - [Fire Suppression and Explosion Protection](#)
 - [Foam Blowing Agents](#)
 - [Refrigeration and Air Conditioning](#)
 - [Sterilants](#)
- **Paper and Paper Products** (EPA) Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines for Paper and Paper Products
 - Recycled content recommendations
 - [Printing and Writing Papers](#)
 - [Vendors, Researchers and Related Organizations](#)
 - [Newsprint](#)
 - [Commercial/Industrial Sanitary Tissue](#)
 - [Paperboard and Packaging](#)
 - [Miscellaneous Paper Products](#)

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- **Recycled Content**

- The online [Recycled Content Tool](#) estimates greenhouse gas impacts associated with purchasing and/or manufacturing materials with varying postconsumer recycling content.

- **[Sustainable Materials Management Prioritization Tools | US EPA](#)**

- The Sustainable Materials Management Prioritization Tools (SMM Prioritization Tools) are life cycle-based tools to help users identify potential opportunities for environmental improvement in the production and consumption of goods and services. These tools can serve as a starting place to help prioritize actions, focus limited human and financial resources to achieve greater overall environmental benefit and consider key industries for collaboration.

Additional Support:

[Institutional Purchasers of Greener Products and Services | US EPA](#)

- [Making a difference](#)
- [Considering the full array of impacts](#)
- [Evaluating environmental marketing claims](#)
- [Using ecolabels and standards](#)

[Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council | SPLC](#)

The Sustainable Purchasing Leadership Council (SPLC) is a global community of purchasers, suppliers, advocates, and experts dedicated to driving positive impact through the power of procurement.

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