

Environmental Purchasing Guide

A reference guide for
City of Richmond staff
designed to stimulate
market development
opportunities for
environmentally
preferred products

The City of Richmond would like to acknowledge the Greater Vancouver Regional District for providing support and resources to assist in the development of this guide.

The Environmental Purchasing Policy and Guide were adopted by the City of Richmond Council on November 14, 2000.

This guide was published by the
City of Richmond
6911 No. 3 Road
Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1
Phone: (604) 276-4000
Fax: (604) 276-4029

This guide has been printed on paper containing 30% recycled material.

Disclaimer: The health and safety of workers and the public are the first priority in any environmental purchase or practice. Users of this guide are responsible for complying with all applicable codes and statutory or regulatory requirements. Any specifications presented are not intended to constitute or render engineering, architectural, legal or other professional services or advice. Nor should they be a substitute for such services or advice from an experienced professional directed to a specific design situation. While information in any specifications is believed to be accurate, the City of Richmond, its employees, and its consultants on this project shall not be liable for damages arising from errors or omissions in specifications.

Welcome to the Environmental Purchasing Guide

Local governments throughout the Greater Vancouver Regional District demonstrate their leadership and commitment to the environment in a myriad of ways. Through their policies, plans and actions – from protecting environmentally sensitive areas and providing residential recycling programs to maintaining green space and reducing energy consumption in government facilities– municipalities cultivate a culture of caring for the environment.

Environmental purchasing is yet another way local governments can demonstrate their commitment to the environment. Environmental purchasing involves evaluating potential purchases not just by standard criteria such as price and performance but by environmental criteria such as recycled content, packaging and energy efficiency as well. This guide is intended to support local governments as they work to include environmental considerations in every purchasing decision.

“Green procurement should be a policy of all governments, including municipal governments. Their purchasing power can stimulate creation of environmentally benign products by ensuring there’s a market for those products.”

Governments need to walk the talk — not just expect others to do it. There is a movement in that direction but it needs to be given greater priority.”

Sherri Watson, environmental management consultant with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

The City of Richmond has taken a leadership role in developing this guide on environmental purchasing. It is recognized that staff need practical support in the form of current information and resources to integrate environmental considerations into their buying decisions. This guide strives to provide that support for staff in government and government agency settings.

While the primary audience for this guide is City of Richmond staff, it is hoped that other municipalities will adopt the guide as a resource for addressing environmental purchasing policies and practices in their jurisdictions. There is tremendous potential for positive environmental changes when all Lower Mainland municipalities focus their considerable purchasing power on reducing the environmental impact of the products and services they use. The guide focuses on typical purchases in these settings and provides general guidelines and tips on how to go about “green procurement”. (Although certain sections of this guide are applicable for purchases in the business/commercial sector, the guide is not intended as a reference for the business/commercial sector user. Such users are referred to the section “Environmental Labelling” in Chapter 4 as a springboard for their own research.)

If you are with the City of Richmond ...

This guide progresses logically from “big picture” information on City policies and programs to the nitty-gritty details individuals need to incorporate environmental considerations into purchasing decisions. The first time you look through this guide you may like to spend some time in the early chapters, familiarising yourself with Richmond’s environmental policies and plans as well as the contents of the guide. After that, choose a section that best addresses your question or issue and dive in!

Environmental Purchasing Guide

Welcome to the *Environmental Purchasing Guide*

If you are with another local government ...

You may wish to simply skim Chapters 1 and 3 that contain the policies and plans behind Richmond's environmental purchasing initiatives. While there are valuable insights to be gained from reading about Richmond's policies and plans, you may be anxious to get to the nitty-gritty of environmental purchasing. In that case, be sure to read Chapter 2 "Using This Guide" to find out how to get the most out of this resource, then go to the section that will best address your interest or needs.

Table of Contents

Welcome to the <i>Environmental Purchasing Guide</i>	i
Table of Contents	iii
Chapter 1 - Environmental Purchasing Matters.....	1
Environmental Purchasing Defined	1
Why Bother	2
Reducing Environmental Impacts.....	2
Supporting Recycling Programs	2
Increasing Demand For Environmentally Sound Products	2
Taking Personal Responsibility	3
Government’s Commitment	3
Richmond’s Strategic Management Plan	3
Richmond Official Community Plan	4
Richmond State of the Environment Report.....	4
Richmond’s Energy Conservation Policy	5
Greater Vancouver Regional District Solid Waste Management Plan.....	5
Turning Talk Into Action	6
Making Environmental Purchasing Decisions.....	7
Chapter 2 - Using This Guide	9
Where to Start.....	9
Meeting Corporate Expectations	10
Chapter 3 - The Environmental Purchasing Policy.....	11
The City of Richmond’s Environmental Purchasing Policy.....	11
In Plain English.....	12
A Little Background.....	12
Chapter 4 - Considerations Before You Buy	13
Environmentally Preferred Products.....	13
A Comprehensive Environmental Purchasing Checklist	14
Environmental Purchasing Checklist.....	14
Assessing Life Cycle Impacts.....	15
Environmental Labelling.....	15
The Environmental Choice Program.....	16
Green Seal	16
Energy Star.....	17
EnerGuide.....	17
Power Smart	17

Chapter 5 - Guidelines For Purchasing Specific Types of Products	19
Caution! Overload Warning.....	19
Customized Guidelines and Specifications Versus Seals of Approval.....	20
5.1 General Building Maintenance	21
5.1.1 Paint.....	23
5.1.2 Insulation	24
5.1.3 Sealants and Caulking Compounds	25
5.1.4 Adhesives.....	26
5.1.5 Carpeting.....	27
5.1.6 Ceiling Tile	28
5.1.7 Roofing	29
5.1.8 Walls (Gypsum-dry wall)	30
5.2 Janitorial Products.....	31
5.2.1 General Purpose Cleaning Agents.....	31
5.2.2 Industrial and Commercial Cleaners	32
5.2.3 Disposable Papers and Tissues.....	33
5.3 Vehicles and Maintenance.....	34
5.3.1 Oils	35
5.3.2 Fuels	36
5.3.3 Tires.....	37
5.4 Furniture and Office Systems	38
5.4.1 Office Furniture and Workstation Panel Systems	38
5.4.2 Demountable (full wall) Partitions	39
5.5 Office Equipment and Related Services.....	40
5.5.1 Photocopiers and Facsimile Machines.....	40
5.5.2 Printing Cartridges (including remanufactured printing cartridges).....	41
5.5.3 Printing Inks.....	42
5.6 Office Supplies	43
5.6.1 Batteries	43
5.6.2 Envelopes.....	44
5.6.3 Printing and Writing Papers (and uncoated mechanical printing paper)	45
5.6.4 Miscellaneous Recycled Paper Products	46
5.7 Lighting and Lighting Systems.....	47
5.7.1 Lights.....	47
5.8 Construction, Renovation, Demolition.....	48
5.8.1 Construction and Demolition Waste.....	48
5.9 Parks, Recreation Amenities and Landscaping.....	54
5.9.1 Organic Turf Management.....	54
5.9.2 Recycled Rubber	55
5.10 Special Programs	56
5.10.1 Backyard Compost Bins	56

Chapter 6 - Sample Specifications	57
Three Steps to Gathering Your Resources	57
Additional Resources	58
Chapter 7 - Recycled Products Listing, GVRD	69
Chapter 8 - Reference Materials	71
Appendices.....	73
Appendix A	73
Evolution of Environmental Procurement Policies	73
Appendix B.....	75
Five Guiding Principles of Environmental Purchasing	75
Appendix C	77
GVRD Specification Resources.....	77
GVRD - Project Waste Management Master Specification	
GVRD - Building Deconstruction Master Specification	
GVRD - Directory of Resource Efficient Building Products (CD Format)	