

What guidelines should my business set for buying recycled content products?

- Establish a purchasing policy to buy recycled content products when possible.
- Set a percentage goal, e.g. at least 25% of all purchases should have recycled content.
- Ask current suppliers for recycled content products; make it clear that this is your preference.
- Compare the cost of a product over time. For example, the initial cost of a product made out of recycled content plastic lumber may be more, but it will require much less maintenance and have a longer life than wood lumber, and will be more cost-effective over the life of the product.
- Review renewable contracts to consider recycled products as substitutes.
- Consider cooperative purchases with other businesses or local governments to increase volumes purchased and reduce unit prices.

Resources:

The Official Recycled Products Guide, American Recycling Market, P.O. Box 577, Ogdensburg, New York 13669, 800-267-0707.

Buy Recycled Business Alliance, National Recycling Coalition, 1727 King Street, Suite 105, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2720. ext. 403, 713-683-9025, Fax: 703-683-9026.

Green Seal, 1730 Rhode Island Ave., NW, Suite 1050, Washington, DC 20036; 202-331-7337, Fax: 202-331-7533.

Missouri Buy-Recycled Program, Missouri Market Development Program, P.O. Box 744, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102, 314-526-5555.

To join *Choose Environmental Excellence*, call 816-561-1087 or visit our web site at www.environmental-excellence.org. We'll send you a list of *Simple Steps* you can take to improve the environment and a free *Choose Environmental Excellence magnet*.

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How Can Businesses Buy Products With



Recycled Content?



CEE FAQ*

Choose Environmental Excellence

answers * Frequently Asked Questions

Businesses — Buy Recycled!

Why should your business buy products with recycled content?

Buying recycled...

- conserves natural resources and energy.
- creates jobs and economic development.
- sets an example for other businesses.
- provides a proactive—rather than reactive—approach to waste management.
- enhances your image with clients and customers.

What do the terms “post-consumer” and “pre-consumer” mean?

Post-consumer content is material that has been recycled by consumers. **Pre-consumer** content is manufacturing scrap that is recycled back in to the product.

Compare labels. When purchasing a high percentage post-consumer content product, you are creating a demand for the materials you recycle.

What is the difference between “recycled” and “recyclable”?

A **recycled** product (+) has been made from recycled material. A **recyclable** product (♻️) can be recycled. Try to buy items that have both been recycled and that *can* be recycled. The presence of a recycling symbol on an item does not necessarily mean it can be recycled locally; find out by calling 816-561-1090.

Are recycled content products hard to find?

Many major national chains and some smaller stores carry a large variety of recycled content products. If you currently purchase products through a sales representative, ask what products are available with recycled content. Many companies specialize in recycled content products, or have recycled products sections in their catalogues. You can also find many

specialized products on the internet.



Do recycled content products cost more?

Many recycled products are priced competitively with non-recycled products. Some may even cost less. However, paying a little more for recycled content will create more demand and will ultimately result in lower costs to the consumer and manufacturer.



Are recycled content products a poorer quality than new or “virgin” products?

Overall, there is no significant difference between the quality of recycled and non-recycled products. As with any product, performance and quality may vary with the manufacturer and you should always request a sample for test purposes. Many manufacturers of recycled content products offer money-back guarantees if customers are not satisfied with performance.

Basic office supplies that have recycled content:

- | | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| binders | bulletin boards |
| dividers | file boxes |
| scissors | paper clips |
| pencils | pencil sharpeners |
| rulers | file cabinets |
| push pins | computer disks |



Paper supplies: adding machine rolls, bond paper, business cards, calendars, computer printout paper, copy paper, envelopes, file folders, hanging folders, index cards, labels, loose leaf paper, message pads, Post-it Notes®, report covers, spiral bound notebooks, tissue paper, toilet paper, wrapping paper



Toner cartridges cost less to buy recycled *and* can be recycled.

Recycled furniture is available from many sources. Surplus Exchange, a non-profit office furniture and supply clearinghouse, serves businesses in the Kansas City metropolitan area: 1107 Hickory, Kansas City, Missouri, 816-472-0444, Fax: 816-472-8105.

Check the Yellow Pages under *Office Furniture - Used* for other stores that sell used office furniture.