

# **ENVIRONMENTAL PURCHASING GUIDELINES**

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Seattle University is committed to sustainability – a framework for making decisions that integrates human, environmental and economic needs as a whole system. To support the university’s commitment, it is the university’s goal to include environmental considerations in securing products and services as well as the advocacy for all end users to practice environmentally preferable purchasing.

## **Definition**

Environmental purchasing is defined as the practice of purchasing products and services that reduce our harmful impact on the environment and all species that depend on the environment. Environmentally preferable products and services take life cycle issues into account, as well as sustainable practices. In U.S. Government Executive Order 13101, environmentally preferable products and services are defined as, “products or services that have a lesser impact on human health and environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose. This comparison may consider raw materials acquisition, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, reuse, operation, maintenance, or disposal of the product or service.”

## **Goals and Procedures**

When purchasing a product or service, departments should evaluate environmentally preferable attributes equally along with quality, price and availability. It is further recommended that all purchases conducted by university employees for their department follow the same guidelines choosing products and services that provide the most environmental attributes. As with all purchasing decisions, however, these guidelines should not be executed at the expense of product performance, availability or reasonable cost. The following is a list of environmental attributes:

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| Biobased   | Low life cycle costs                         |
| Biodegradable or compostable   | Recyclable, reusable, refillable, repairable |
| Durable  | Made of recycled-content                     |
| Energy and water-efficient   | Reduced greenhouse emissions                 |
| EnergyStar Rated   | Reduced packaging                            |
| Environmental impact of transportation   | Refurbished                                  |
| Free of harmful chemicals (including but not limited to: carcinogens, CFCs, lead, mercury, PBTs, VOCs) | Made from rapidly renewable materials        |
| Produced in the Pacific Northwest  | Zero or low toxicity                         |
|  | Upgradeable                                  |

*Definitions of all these attributes can be found on [www.seattleu.edu/facilities](http://www.seattleu.edu/facilities).*