

# City of Palo Alto Green Purchasing Program



Julie Weiss  
City of Palo Alto  
Regional Water Quality Control Plant  
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# Green Purchasing Began in 1990s

Policy and Directives	Related services and goods
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Zero Waste</b> EPP listed as action item in operations plan and <b>Recycled Content Ordinance</b> for Paper Purchases</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recycled oil and antifreeze</li> <li>• Recycled content office and bathroom papers</li> <li>• Blueprint recycling standards</li> <li>• Copier standards for packaging and duplexing</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Mercury and Dioxin Elimination Policy</b> Reduction of mercury and dioxin in products and processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low-mercury fluorescent lights</li> <li>• Process-chlorine free papers</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Integrated Pest Management Plan</b> Staff use non-chemical options first, least toxic pesticides only when needed, contractors must provide same or better service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less-toxic EcoWise Certified structural pest control</li> <li>• Bay Friendly Landscaping at parks and golf course</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Water and Energy efficient directives and policies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy efficient office lighting, HVAC systems</li> <li>• LED traffic lights</li> <li>• Green cleaning products</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Green Building Policy</b> Seeks alternative materials, energy and water efficiency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implemented in buildings remodels occur</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Sustainability Policy</b> Guidance for minimizing impact to environment and people locally and globally <b>Green Business Certification</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extended producer responsibility from vendors and manufacturers</li> <li>• Preference to Certified Green Businesses</li> <li>• Green custodial products</li> </ul>

# Green purchasing policy helped integrate environmental projects

- Align purchasing policies with Climate Protection, Zero Waste, and water quality goals
- EPP becomes the standard procedure
- Easier to identify and incorporate green products into City use



# Climate protection plan leverage the green purchasing policy

- Drafted by Purchasing Department, Sustainability Team and interdepartmental Green Purchasing Team
- Reviewed by Department Heads
- Adoption through City of Palo Alto Climate Protection Plan

# Key policy elements

The City recognizes that its purchases of goods and services can contribute significantly to the success of its sustainability policies and goals. Therefore, the City shall incorporate environmental, economic and social stewardship criteria into its purchases of products and services. This policy will

**align the City's purchases and Purchasing Department policies and procedures**

with the City's sustainability policies and programs to protect and conserve natural resources; minimize the City's contributions to global warming, solid waste, local and global pollution, and toxic chemical exposures to people and

the environment; and promote human health and well-being. **This policy shall not require the**

**City to exclude competition, or to purchase products or services that do not perform adequately or are not available at a reasonable price in a reasonable period of time.**

To achieve these goals the City Manager shall convene a **Sustainable Purchasing Committee.**

The Committee will include management-level staff from key departments as identified by the City Manager or his/her designee. The Committee will create a plan and related procedures that include **a framework**

**criteria to evaluate the cost,** performance and sustainable benefits of those products and services. This criteria would employ a total cost of ownership analysis which includes life cycle factors such as energy and water use, maintenance, replacement, disposal and recycling, and environmental and social benefits to the local and global community

- an assessment of whether Municipal Code amendments are necessary to implement City goals.
- commitment and engagement of all City staff to identify sustainable products and services that are not purchased centrally. **training** for staff on new products and purchasing procedures that are centrally purchased

- support for external purchasing-related initiatives and programs that benefit City sustainability goals, e.g., extended producer responsibility and independent product and service performance certifications

**requirements for annual vendor reports on sustainable product purchases tracking**

dollars spent, units purchased, and other information as specified by the City an appropriate program reporting approach recommendations for financial and human resources that are needed to implement and maintain this policy **a three year timeline** for implementing changes to the City's purchasing specifications, scopes of service, and procedures. Tasks will be prioritized based on need and available resources. This timeline will be reviewed annually and adjusted as needed.

- This policy and plan will be reviewed every three years by the Sustainable Purchasing Committee or as needed to realign with City priorities and requirements.

# Strength and Weaknesses

- The policy provides a vision, direction and flexibility for what to do based on priorities of the time
- Can be open to interpretation and time can be lost and process added to identifying the way forward

# How to prioritize purchases and balance costs?

## Green Purchasing Evaluation Flow Chart VI

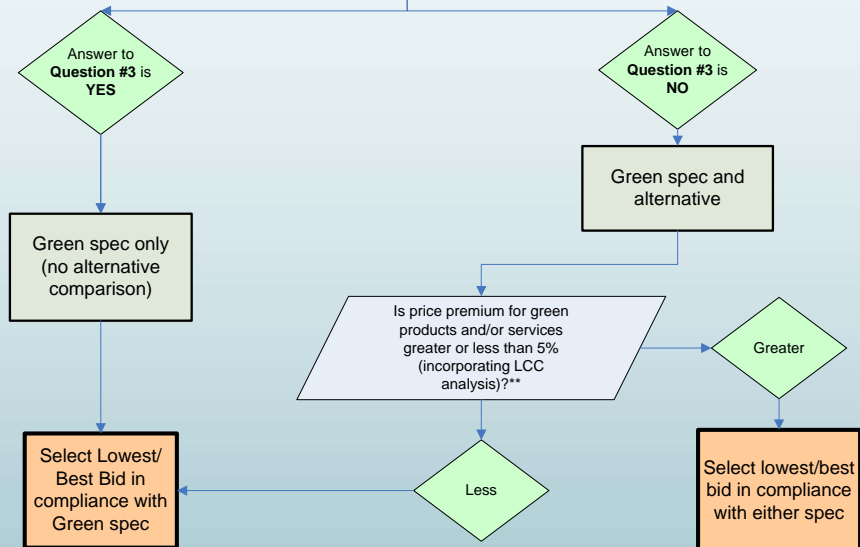
March 23, 2010

New Contract or Contract up for Renewal

### DISCOVERY PHASE

Purchasing to discuss with Project Manager and stakeholders regarding their basic requirements for the product or service. In addition, Project Manager, Purchasing, and/or Green Purchasing Committee will agree on project timeline and roles, and examine the following questions:

1. Has a Life Cycle Cost (LCC) analysis been done on the product or service? Can it be done? (LCC analysis is considered a Best Practice, but is not a mandatory requirement.)
2. Are there regional purchasing collaboratives that may offset costs of the green product or service? (Working with a regional purchasing collaborative is also considered a Best Practice, but is not a mandatory requirement.)
3. Is there a City policy or regulation or Council directive that requires a green product or service? (Adhering to City policies and regulations and Council directives is mandatory.)\* For example:  
 Plastic Reduction Policy  
 Pesticide Reduction (Stormwater Regulation)  
 Zero Waste Plan (Council Directive)



#### NOTES:

\*Other opportunities or requirements may emerge which prompt the need for exclusively a green spec and shall be discussed with Purchasing and other stakeholders.

\*\*Price premium threshold was tentatively set at 5% for 2010. This may be revisited and revised in future years.

# How do we prioritize products and services to green?

- Work from prioritized three-year work plan
- Align with existing department priorities  
e.g., polystyrene reduction, more effective gopher control
- Monitor additional purchases and opportunities as they arise



# Lessons learned

- It's about what is purchased **and** how it's used. Have policy/procedures include operational changes and training to reduce/offset costs.
  - New copiers preset to duplex reduced paper use by 15% during first nine months, saving \$7,600
- Authorize life cycle costing use
- Include whatever sticking points you foresee

# Have your policy authorize wise use of certifications (and discriminate between them)



**Sin of the Hidden Trade-off**

**Sin of No Proof**

**Sin of Vagueness**

**Sin of Worshiping False Labels**

**Sin of Irrelevance**

**Sin of Lesser of Two Evils**

**Sin of Fibbing**

# **Work with others outside of the usual green purchasing team**

- Keep training and provide information that is personal to staff
  - Less-toxic personal care and pesticides ([www.ourwaterourworld.org](http://www.ourwaterourworld.org))
- Engage interested non-traditional partners
  - e.g., IT, Parks
- Take advantage of regional expertise

# Include the responsibility of vendors and manufacturers in your policy



(The City prefers)...to conduct business with certified Bay Area Green Businesses (or those actively enrolled in the program with the intention of completing the certification process) when the business provides the service needed at a reasonable cost; proposer shall provide the contact information of the Green Business coordinator if seeking certification.



- Goods purchased by Contractor on behalf of the City shall be purchased in accordance with the City's Environmental Purchasing Policy including but not limited to Extended Producer Responsibility requirements for products and packaging. A copy of this policy is on file at the Purchasing Office.
- Reusable/returnable pallets shall be taken back by the Contractor, at no additional cost to the City, for reuse or recycling. Contractor shall provide documentation from the facility accepting the pallets to verify that pallets are not being disposed.



*A cynic is a person who knows the price of everything but the value of nothing.*

*Oscar Wilde*

# What we've greened

- Producer responsibility targeting hazardous waste, plastic reduction, waste reduction
- Green Business Certification
- Lights/switches
- Custodial products and triclosan-free soaps
- EPEAT Gold for Computers and monitors
- Structural Pest control
- Landscape maintenance
- Copiers, printers, printing services, blue print
- Street lights
- Architectural plans, oversized printing
- Print services
- Boiler plate and legal language in contracts
- Operational changes to maximize efficient use of products



GOLD



# 2010-2013 Plan

**Integrate City environmental policies and directives into Purchasing practices** (Energy and water efficiency, Zero Waste, pollution prevention, toxics reduction, GHG reduction).

***Objectives:***

- Reduce plastic foam, bottles, plastic bags and other plastic packaging. (Per Zero Waste Plan and PA Plastics Reduction Policy).
- Continue to integrate extended producer responsibility into solicitation requirements
- Continue to integrate Green Business Certification into solicitations requirements
- Green 3-5 items per year, some pre-targeted, and some based on upcoming opportunities.

**Maximize collaboration on Green Purchasing throughout the City**

***Objectives:***

- Collaborate with Purchasing Department and meet 2-3 times a year with Purchasing staff for exchanges and updates.
- Strategize how to i.d. contracts on the front end to collaborate on green specs
- Recruit new members to join Green Purchasing Team
- Foster broader participation in green purchasing through education and outreach
- Continue with Utility LCC classes
- Provide additional classes and training?
- Partner regionally with green purchasing groups as appropriate

**Track, report, and celebrate successful Green Purchasing projects and educate staff and Council on program progress.**

***Objectives:***

- Populate Green Purchasing Procedures in Purchasing Manual to include new procedures, boilerplate legal contract language, and links to contract scope language that has been greened
- Refresh Green Purchasing goals and tasks annually or as needed to based on current environmental and sustainability priorities
- Develop a reporting format to track annual project updates, ROI (financial and environmental and policy), and costs. Issue first report by April 1, 2011.



# Santa Clara County's Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy



William Shaw

Buyer III, Procurement Department

# My perspective



- Long-time buyer for Santa Clara County....
- Just recently started working with green purchasing ...

# Creation of SCC's Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy

Members of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors were interested in an EPP policy



The *Procurement Dept.* & the *Board's Legal Dept.* took the lead in drafting a policy



Other departments Participated / commented  
(Dept. of Environmental Health, Waste Management, etc.)



The SCC Board of Supervisors passed the EPP policy on September 5, 2009

# *Key Points about EPP Policy*

- **Short:** Santa Clara County's EPP Policy is just over 2 pages, while others are often 10 or more pages
- **Focused on implementation:** Establishes a EPP team with representatives from all Departments to implement policy
- **Not proscriptive:** Decisions about which product categories to target are left up to the EPP Team
- **Leading role for Procurement Department**

# Structure of Santa Clara County's EPP Policy

- Section 1: Purpose
- Section 2: Goals
- Section 3: Policy
- Section 4: Implementation



*The first 3 sections all fit on one page. Section 4 is the longest, at just over a page*

# Section 1: Purpose

States that Santa Clara County is committed to sustainable procurement:

*“purchasing products and services that will enable it to meet its current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”*



# Section 2: Goals

- Lists environmental goals that the County wants to pursue
  - Reduce impact on human health & environment
  - Reduce consumption of resources
  - Minimize the release of greenhouse gases, etc.
  - *A total of 14 items*

# Section 3: Policy

- **The County will purchase Environmentally Preferable Products** unless they are:

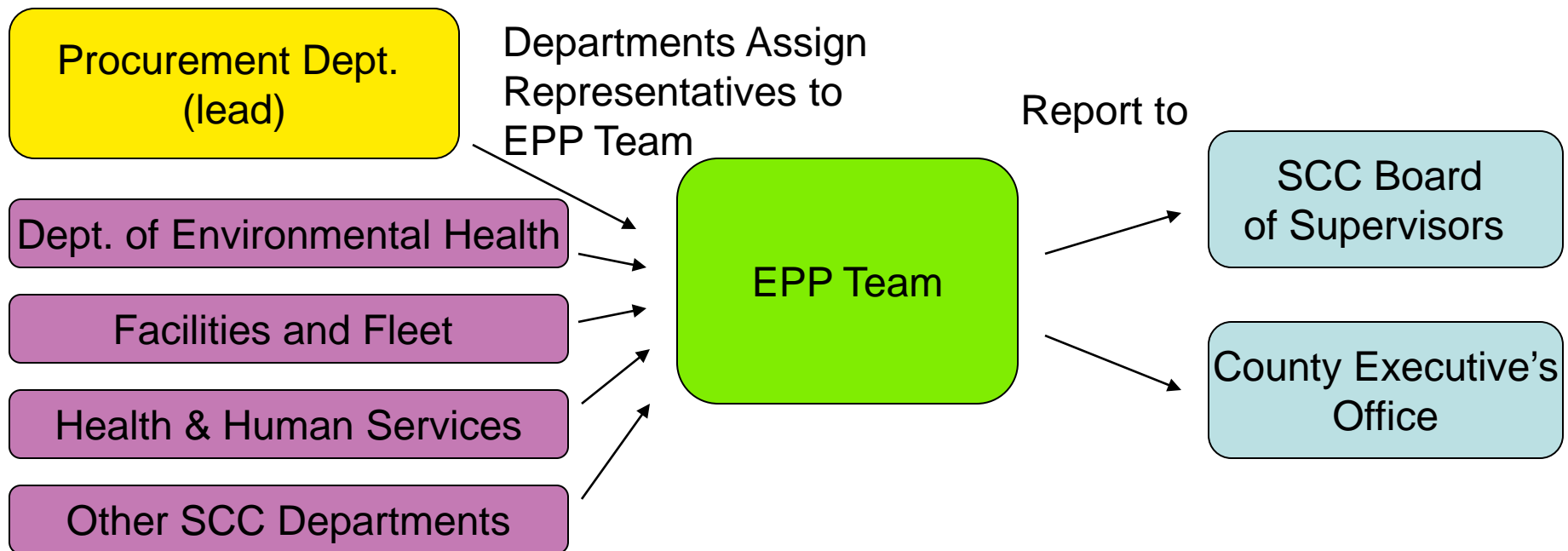
- Not part of a competitive market
- Not available in a reasonable time frame
- Not cost-effective
- Do not perform as needed

- The County is not required to terminate existing contracts to comply with the EPP policy



# Section 4: Implementation

Establishes an “*EPP Team*” to implement the EPP Policy



# Roles & Responsibilities

## **EPP Team**

- Create implementation plan
- Choose product categories to target

## **Procurement Department**

- Work with other departments to develop product specs
- Include EPP specifications in solicitations & evaluation

## **Other Departments**

- Include EPP criteria in any contracts that are not centralized with the Procurement Department

# EPP Team Planning

- After the EPP Policy was in place, the EPP Team identified the best opportunities for environmental preferable purchasing
- The Team Created two Product category “tiers:”

## **Tier 1 (address in Year 1)**

Bay-friendly Landscaping  
Re-refined & Bio-based  
Lubricants  
Green Cleaners  
Rechargeable Batteries

## **Tier 2 (address in Year 2)**

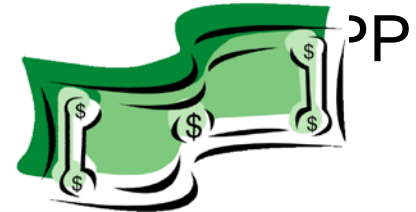
Office Supplies  
Printing & Writing Paper  
Lighting  
Recycled Plastic Lumber  
Paint

# Our EPP Policy Today

- Overall, the process is working well.
- Products that were not on our original Tier 1 or Tier 2 lists have become priorities
  - Compostable food service ware, Computer recycling, Local Produce, Waste Vegetable Oil



- The County will save money with some Contracts
  - Re-refined motor oil, Waste Vegetable Oil



- The EPP Team is currently planning to revise the Tier 2 priorities. In the current budgetary environment, the emphasis is on saving money



**William Shaw**  
**Buyer III, Procurement Department**  
**Santa Clara County**

2310 N. 1st Street, Suite 201  
San Jose, CA 95131-1040  
(408) 491-7416  
[william.shaw@proc.sccgov.org](mailto:william.shaw@proc.sccgov.org)

# EPP – Policy and Practice

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**Mary Bell Austin**  
**County of San Mateo**

Buying Green . . . Buying Smart workshop  
October 20, 2010

# San Mateo County's Policy

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- ❑ Adopted by Board of Supervisors' resolution, October 2000
  - ❑ Billed as an "Environmental Purchasing Policy"
  - ❑ Crafted by a multi-dept committee
  - ❑ Established an on-going committee, with annual review
  - ❑ Established objectives, and focus areas
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# San Mateo County's Policy

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## Policy Objectives

- Expand purchase of env pref products
  - Identify env pref alternatives
  - Recommend alternative processes as operational goals
  - Collect and maintain up to date info on manufacturers, vendors, etc for env pref products
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# EPP Committee Roles

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Research, evaluate, and implement key areas:

- Recycled content products
  - Less/non-toxic materials and processes
  - Energy and water efficient choices
  - Natural resource and landscaping mngt
  - Renewable products
  - Disposal and pollution prevention
  - Packaging
  - Green Building
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# Specifications

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- Each key area has specs outlined
  - Examples:
    - EPA guidelines for paper and janitorial supplies
    - Recycled content and low VOCs for carpet
    - IPM for parks and landscaping
    - No rainforest or tropical hardwoods
    - Packaging – reusable, recyclable, compostable
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# Policy Implementation

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- ❑ EPP committee didn't last
  - ❑ Some recommendations did manifest
    - Green building program
    - Energy upgrades
  - ❑ Individual purchasing policies still used more routinely
    - 30% PCW paper (1998 standard)
  - ❑ Almost no centralized control
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# Today's Realities

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- Everyday purchasing
    - Majority done at division level
    - No centralized data
  - Departmental initiatives
  - County Manager initiatives
    - Bottled water ban
    - Take-out packaging rule + ordinance
    - Other individual policies
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# Where To?

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## Institutional Needs

- Some centralized resource for purchasers
- Some centralized oversight
- Some level of tracking/ measures
- Dedicated resources for EPP

## **Paper Policy v. Dynamic System**

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