



Green Purchasing State Profile

State of New York



New York State has established an ambitious *State Green Procurement and Agency Sustainability Program* under an executive order (EO 4), which directs state agencies and authorities to consider a broad range of environmental and health criteria when making purchasing decisions. EO 4 establishes an institutional framework – co-led by the Office of General Services (OGS) and the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) – to guide the state’s sustainable purchasing prioritization, standard-setting and reporting activities. This interagency collaboration has created dozens of “green” specifications, which are serving as a valuable resource for purchasers developing contracts for commodities, services and technology. New York State has also developed an effective *Green Cleaning Program* in response to policies mandating their use by state agencies and K-12 schools.

Major Accomplishments to Date

The New York State Interagency Committee on Sustainability and Green Procurement (established under EO 4) has developed [environmental specifications](#) for more than 30 product types including, but not limited to:

- *Electronics/Appliances* (air conditioners, computers, clothes and dish washers, refrigerators and vacuum cleaners);
- *Transportation Products* (hydraulic and motor oil, engine block heaters, pavement marking paint, traffic message boards and safety products, treated rock salt and vehicles);
- *Office & Building Operations* (cleaning products, hand soaps, compact fluorescent lamps, drinking fountains, electric hand dryers, motion-sensitive light switches, outdoor furniture/playground structures, printing/ink, recycling services, toilets/composting toilets, and turf and pest management); and
- *Food Service* (single-use food containers and utensils).

New York State has developed a coordinated [Green Cleaning Program](#) that helps state agencies and schools “promote adoption of effective green cleaning practices, leading to healthier indoor environments.” The program provides a list of state-approved green cleaning products, best practices, online training courses, a [cost calculator](#), and more. In FY 11-12, 85% of state agencies and authorities reported using green cleaning products all or most of the time. The state has determined that green cleaners cost the same or less, and work as effectively as conventional products.



In 2012, Governor Cuomo launched “Build Smart NY,” an initiative to reduce energy consumption in state government buildings by 20% by April 2020. A core feature of Build Smart NY is EO 88, which replaces EO 111 and directs agencies and authorities to monitor energy use, conduct audits, and identify opportunities for cost-effective energy improvements and on-site generation of renewable energy. Reductions in energy use achieved under EO 111 since FY 01-02 are estimated to save the state at least \$50 million per year. In FY 11-12, 84% of agencies and authorities reported the purchase of energy efficient equipment and appliances all or most of the time, and 27.5% of total State government electrical use came from renewable sources.

OGS negotiated lower prices on its Green Computer Aggregate Buy compared to prior years while adding “green” specifications. In FY 08-09, \$130 million was saved off the contract price while specifying computers that met [EPEAT](#) Silver “Plus 7” (which refers to EPEAT’s seven optional toxics reduction credits). The State estimates that computers purchased using these contracts will yield \$16 million in energy savings over their expected “lives”, avoid five million pounds of solid waste, and reduce toxic chemicals by 30,852 pounds. New York continued savings in subsequent years by changing to EPEAT Gold “Plus 7” and for the period February 2012 through February 2013 approximately \$95.6 million was saved from the state contract price. Additionally, estimated benefits for the contract will yield 9.4 million in energy savings over their expected “lives”, avoid three million pounds of solid waste, and reduce toxic chemicals by 21,465 pounds.

In FY 11-12, New York State agencies purchased \$8.3 million worth of copy paper, a 42% reduction compared to FY 08-09. Nearly half of that total was 100% post-consumer recycled content paper bleached using a chlorine-free process, a significant increase from the 22% (\$3.3 million) spend on such paper in FY 08-09.

State agencies have virtually eliminated the purchase of bottled water. No agencies are purchasing bottled water without a special exemption, and only nine agencies out of 35 use bottled water under special circumstances, such as the transport of detainees for long distances. In addition, 80% of authorities not required to eliminate bottled water use have restricted its use to special circumstances anyway.

Key Green Purchasing Policy

Executive Order No. 4 Establishing a State Green Procurement and Agency Sustainability Program

(2008) sets up an Interagency Committee on Sustainability and Green Procurement that is tasked with developing “green” specifications and procurement lists for state agencies to use when developing their contracts for commodities, services and technology. Each state agency and authority must also develop and implement a Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship Program, set goals for reducing energy, water and paper consumption (and waste generation), designate a Sustainability and Green Procurement Coordinator, conduct outreach and training, and report their agency’s progress to the state each year.

EO 4 directs agencies to develop Sustainability Programs, defined as projects programs and policies designed to reduce the adverse public health and environmental impacts of an agency’s activities and operations. Areas of focus include: reduction, reuse, recycling and composting of solid waste; reduction or elimination of the use and generation of toxic substances; enhanced energy efficiency and use of renewable energy sources; conservation of water and other natural resources; and maximization of the use of green products, service, and technology.

[[Greening New York State](#): First Annual Progress Report on State Procurement and Agency Sustainability, FY 08-09]

New York State’s Green Cleaning Law (2005) requires all K-12 schools in the state to use “environmentally sensitive” cleaning and maintenance products with assistance of OGS. **Executive Order 134 (2005)** jump-started the state’s *Green Cleaning Program* by directing state agencies to use environmentally preferable cleaning and maintenance products. Although this EO was not renewed, it has been superseded by the green cleaning specification issued under EO 4. In addition, **Executive Order 18, Restricting the Use of Bottled Water (2009)**, seeks to improve the environment and save taxpayer dollars by eliminating the purchase and use of bottled water in state agency facilities.

Statement on the Consideration of Chemicals in the Development of Green Specifications (2010)

At the request of the EO 4 Advisory Council, the EO 4 Interagency Committee adopted a policy statement that describes how chemicals that pose potential health and environmental impacts are considered in the development of green product specifications. The policy references several lists of chemicals of concern, including the National Toxicology Program’s Report on Carcinogens, and Action Plans developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the federal Toxic Substances Control Act.

Green Purchasing Website and Green Contract Information

New York State’s Green Purchasing website is the state’s central web portal for information about its green purchasing policies, procedures, specifications, progress reports.

The OGS Green Purchasing website includes a **list of current contracts** that offer environmentally preferable products, including products that are made with recycled content and are highly energy-efficient. The list includes contracts for a diverse range of products, including recycled-content copy paper and janitorial paper products, high-efficiency fluorescent lamps, EPEAT-registered computer equipment, waterborne traffic paint, recycled-content carpet, and outdoor furniture and reflective beads for pavement marking, etc. In addition, the **New York State Alternative Fuel Vehicles Program** offers **links to state contracts** for AFVs.

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This profile was developed by the Responsible Purchasing Network on behalf of the National Association of State Procurement Officials (NASPO). Visit us at www.ResponsiblePurchasing.org.