
ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT POLICY



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Approved By: William GR Lahey

Version Control:

Replaces all previous versions with the same title.
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POLICY STATEMENT

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour (NSEL), through its operations and procurement practices, has a key role in promoting environmental awareness and pollution prevention. The department is committed to leading by example and promoting the use of environmentally preferable goods and services. To support this goal, and enhance our existing efforts, the department will formally integrate environmental considerations into procurement decisions and ensure that all procurement activities are consistent with this policy. Preference will be given to the purchase of environmentally preferable goods and services whenever they perform satisfactorily and are available at a reasonable price.

DEFINITIONS

Environmentally Preferable Goods and Services:

Environmentally preferable goods and services have a reduced negative effect on the environment over their full life cycle when compared with competing products or services. They make efficient use of raw materials, energy, and water; generate a minimum of waste; and/or minimize the release of harmful substances into the environment during their production or use. Environmentally preferable goods may also have one or more of the following characteristics; reduced packaging, reduced maintenance requirements, and ease of re-use, refurbishment, re-manufacture or recycling at end of life.

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POLICY OBJECTIVES

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour will demonstrate leadership and a commitment to sustainable development by choosing environmentally preferable goods and services. The benefits of choosing environmentally preferable goods and services that meet quality standards and are reasonably priced will be promoted to all government departments and provincially funded public sector entities such as academic institutions, school boards, hospitals and Crown corporations through implementation of this policy. The main objectives of this policy are to:

- conserve natural resources and energy, promote pollution prevention and minimize or avoid the release of harmful substances into the environment by purchasing environmentally preferable goods and services;
- promote awareness of environmentally preferable goods and services through government procurement practices
- encourage demand for environmentally preferable goods and services

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all employees of NSEL.

This policy applies to all goods, services, vehicles and facilities procured by NSEL through purchase, contract, lease, and/or long term rental.

POLICY DIRECTIVES

Environmentally preferable product options will be assessed based on need and identified priorities and added to procurement catalogs (e.g., Stationary Stockroom) where appropriate. Where required, the department shall also develop specifications and guidelines for selecting environmentally preferable products and services. Goods and services purchased will meet or exceed all specifications developed under this policy.

Specifications for the purchase of goods and services will include characteristics which cause the least amount of harm to the environment during their manufacture, delivery, use and/or disposal while maintaining quality and cost effectiveness.

Consideration will be given to products that:

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- are durable and have a greater lifespan
- are re-usable, refurbishable/rechargeable and can be repaired/upgraded or enhanced during their useful life-span;
- can be purchased in bulk or concentrated form for division/dilution at the point of use
- include post-consumer recycled content in the product and/or package
- can be recycled easily

Consideration will be given to products and services that:

- result in increased conservation of water, energy or fuel;
- have or produce reduced levels of chemicals which are hazardous to human health and/or the environment;
- reduce waste and/or conserve raw materials during manufacturing, packaging or delivery

Contracts or agreements for the procurement of services will include environmental terms and conditions that will be binding on the contractor.

Prior to procurement of facilities for use by NSEL, through lease or purchase, consideration will be given to energy efficiency. Preference will be given to facilities that are energy efficient or can be upgraded at minimal cost. All leased facilities shall provide for the management of materials banned for disposal in compliance with the Solid Waste Resource Management Regulations.

POLICY GUIDELINES

NSEL employees are encouraged to promote and recommend the use of this policy and supporting documents to partners participating in provincially funded or supported projects.

All employees are encouraged to reduce their personal impact on the environment by following guidelines outlined in the documents on the department's Pollution Prevention Plan website, such as the Green Office Checklist (Department of Environment, May 2000).

ACCOUNTABILITY

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All directors and managers with purchasing authorities to which this policy applies are responsible to apply the policy to procurement activities.

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Managers must ensure that staff making purchasing recommendations are informed of this policy and specifications relevant to their activities.

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour - Pollution Prevention Branch

The Pollution Prevention Branch is responsible for continuing to identify environmentally preferable products and/or develop environmentally preferable purchasing specifications for products and services based on departmental priorities.

The Pollution Prevention Branch will distribute relevant information as it becomes available through internal email and the department's Pollution Prevention Plan website.

MONITORING:

Nova Scotia Environment and Labour

Directors/managers will conduct periodic reviews to ensure that procurement requests and activities are conducted in accordance with this policy.

The Director of the Information and Business Services Division shall monitor compliance with the Procurement, lease and rental directives / guidelines.

REFERENCES

Province of Nova Scotia Policy on Government Procurement

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/tran/tour/policy.asp>

Environment Act - Solid Waste Resource Management Regulations

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/enla/emc/wasteman/regulations.asp>

Green Office Checklist (Department of Environment May 2000)

<http://iweb.enla.gov.ns.ca/p2/paperlinks.asp>

NSEL Pollution Prevention Plan Website

This site includes an electronic copy of this policy, specifications for individual products and services, and additional information on greening government operations.

<http://iweb.enla.gov.ns.ca/p2>

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INQUIRIES

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