

# Leveraging the Power of Procurement to Reduce Our Carbon Footprint

“...people live and do business in ways that are good for the economy, the environment, and for communities...Businesses are more efficient, innovative and competitive internationally. The local talent pool is deeper...All Portland residents have access to quality jobs and share in the growth of the economy.” Portland Economic Development Strategy 2009

## Multnomah County’s Sustainable Purchasing Policy

### The Policy

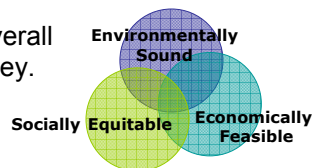
Multnomah County seeks to reduce the environmental impacts of its operations and to promote fiscal responsibility, social equity and environmental stewardship by integrating sustainability into Purchasing processes.

### The Objectives

- To support the County’s sustainability goals.
- To benefit the community by contributing to such environmental and social objectives as reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, energy and water efficiency, waste reduction, and more.
- To leverage the power of the County’s procurement processes to reduce the cost of government while stimulating sustainable industries and the need for sustainable goods and services.

### Guiding Principles

- Commitment to action at all levels.
- Achieving best overall value for the money.
- The triple bottom line provides the guidelines for success.



### What Vendors Can Expect:

- Integration of sustainable requirements into all procurement language.
- At least 10 percent of RFP evaluation points reserved for sustainability criteria.
- Packaging and delivery requirements that are less harmful to the environment.
- Preferences that stimulate business locally, within the region, and within the state.

### What Vendor’s Can Expect, cont’d

- Consideration for all costs associated with the product from delivery to operation to disposal — arriving at a **total** cost of ownership.
- References to third party certifications in RFPs, bid specifications and evaluation criteria. (i.e. EcoLogo and others).
- Assurance that **all** suppliers, regardless of size or minority affiliation, can compete.

**Wanted: 80 percent of 1990 local carbon emission levels achieved by 2050.**

**Needed: Government, business and community collaboration to address our carbon footprint.**

Multnomah County’s Sustainable Purchasing Policy will be at the forefront of Purchasing’s execution of the joint Multnomah County, City of Portland 2009 Climate Action Plan.

**Eight Focus Areas, 18 Objectives, Lots of Action. Four ways your business can help.**



### 1. Buildings and Energy:

Green construction and renovation projects.

### 2. Consumption and Solid Waste:

Reducing waste from local business and County operations — divert 90 percent from the landfill.

### 3. Community Engagement:

Enlist business leaders, engage residents, and

collaborate with governments to bring about the behavior changes we need.

**4. Local Government Operations:** Require resource efficiency plans in all operations, adopt the newest technologies, and **leverage the power of purchasing.**

“...consider carbon emissions from the production, transportation, use and disposal of goods...in purchasing decisions...where practical, consider the sustainable practices of prospective vendors, contractors, and service providers.” 2009 Climate Action Plan

# Multnomah County's Legacy of Sustainable Purchasing Practices

Over the past two decades, Multnomah County has adopted more than thirty policies related to protecting the health of the environment and the community. Of these policies, nearly a dozen are related to purchasing practices. Look at these examples.

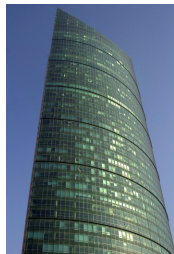
**Recycling and Recycled Paper:** Multnomah County has recycling capability at all of its buildings. The price preference on recycled paper is 15 percent. Recycled paper should contain no less than 50 percent post consumer recycled material.



**Green Power:** Citing the pollution caused by the use of fossil fuels, the relatively low impact of hydroelectric facilities, and the near zero impact of wind power, Multnomah County

sets an example for other governments and agencies by purchasing at least 7 percent of its power from renewable resources offered by PacifiCorp and Portland General Electric. This decision originated in honor of Earth Day 2000.

**Green Building:** A cross-departmental Multnomah County team, assisted by Portland State University students, found that the



benefits of adopting a high-performance, green building policy outweighed the costs by a factor of ten to one. The team cited reports indicating that at the time, 55 percent of greenhouse gases in Multnomah County were attributed to buildings, and 26 percent of the region's waste came from building construction and demolition. Meanwhile the Environmental Protection Agency cited indoor air quality as one of the top environmental risks to public health. Today the County strives to achieve the highest level of LEED certification whenever practicable on new construction and renovation projects over 10,000 square feet.

***Did you know*** that 24 percent of the County's carbon emissions comes from commercial buildings?



**Green Cleaning:** This policy recognizes the risks to environmental and human health posed by certain cleaning products. Recommendations by a cross-departmental

team include:

- Training for custodial service providers in the proper use of new environmentally safe cleaners, and
- Establishment of Central Stores as the source for the County's janitorial supplies.

**Toxics Reduction:** A regional team that included Portland State University, Oregon Health and Science University, representatives from Multnomah County and other agencies, plus the general public, reviewed internal operations and best practices of local governments regarding toxics reduction.

- The resulting policy calls for the use of the Precautionary Principle as a framework for finding less-toxic viable alternatives by 2020.

**Solar Energy Projects on County Facilities:** In partnership with Energy Trust of Oregon, Multnomah County resolved to have solar energy



facilities installed on a number of county buildings creating "Virtual Power Plants" to help meet the energy needs of County operations. The project was hailed as the largest solar power project

in Oregon at its adoption and is projected to generate at least 1,000,000 kWh per year of renewable electricity from County owned buildings and property by the end of 2010.