



SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING

Every product purchased impacts on our environment in some way. Sustainable purchasing involves choosing to buy products that are less damaging to our environment and human health than competing products that serve the same purpose.

One method of achieving this is the increased use of products that contain a percentage of recyclable material that would otherwise end up in landfill. These products include things like recycled paper for printing, recycled paper toilet rolls, polyester jumpers made from recycled plastic bottles and even some building materials are now made from recycled plastics.

Products are considered “sustainable” choices for a number of reasons:

- Contain recycled content;
- are reused or recycled at end of life;
- reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- save water and/or energy;
- are non toxic;
- help protect biodiversity and habitat;
- are made or recycled locally;
- minimise unnecessary purchasing;
- provide long term value for money.

WHAT CAN I (or our school) DO ABOUT IT?

- Find out whether your school has any sustainability criteria when it comes to purchasing products, this might include stationary, printing paper and cartridges for printers;
- If no such policy exists work with your school environmental group to draft a letter to the principal encouraging him/her to consider environmental criteria in their purchasing. Suggest that the group could do some work on finding comparative products and prices of products the school regularly uses;
- Consider what you purchase for your own home. Next time you shop look out for products that contain recycled content, use biodegradable packaging, are made locally or are non toxic.

MORE INFORMATION

North East Waste Forum (NEWF)

www.northeastwasteforum.org.au

NEWF has a Council Waste and Sustainable Purchasing section on their website. This contains useful information on local green suppliers, cleaning products, recycling paper options and tips on how to avoid waste in your office.

Eco Buy

www.ecobuy.org.au

ECO-Buy offers a one-stop-shop to support organisations to 'green' their purchasing, providing a wide range of services and resources, from policy and strategy development and implementation to practical tools and advice.



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MORE INFORMATION

LGSA / DECC Sustainable Choice Program

www.lgsa-plus.net.au

The Sustainable Choice Program aims to build sustainable purchasing capacity within local government through staff training, information sharing and the provision of an online database of sustainable products and services.

Green Directory

www.thegreendirectory.com.au

The Green Directory is Australia's online resource for locating genuine green business, products and services. All businesses are selected for their "green" attributes and sustainable business practices. You can select by category or search by product type.

Reuse Directory

www.reusedirectory.com

The Reuse Directory comprises of a wide range of reuse and repair businesses and organisations in northern NSW. Its aim is to promote 'reuse' as an alternative shopping option, rather than buying new goods created with virgin resources. It's all about waste reduction (of both resources and your money!) and caring for our future.