



2000 Buy-Recycled Series Landscaping Products



EcoPurchasing means
considering attributes
such as

❖
recycled content
toxicity
reusability
durability
repairability

❖
before you buy
a product.

It might be easier than you think to turn garbage into gardens! Whether you're a park manager, professional landscaper, or tend a small garden bed, you'll find recycled-content products offer a quick, effective, and affordable way to make your grounds green.



To make it easier to buy recycled, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) updates the Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPG) every 2 years. Through the CPG, EPA designates items that must contain recycled content when purchased by federal, state, and local agencies, or by government contractors, using appropriated federal funds. Several landscaping products are among these items. EPA's research shows that the items designated in the CPG are of high quality, widely available, and cost-competitive with virgin products. EPA also issues nonregulatory companion guidance—the Recovered Materials Advisory Notice (RMAN)—that recommends levels of recycled content for these items.

So the next time you need a garden hose, edging, landscaping timbers, or soil amendments, buy recycled! You'll help reduce waste, and your landscape will turn a deeper shade of green.





What Is The CPG?

The CPG requires federal agencies to buy items made from recovered materials.

Recycling is more than just dropping off your cans, bottles, and newspapers at the curb or at a local collection facility. Diverting recyclables from the waste stream is only the first of three steps in the recycling process. The second step occurs when companies use these recyclables to manufacture new products. The third step comes when you purchase products made from recovered materials. That's how we close the loop.

To support markets for materials collected in recycling programs and to help these programs expand, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act requires agencies to buy recycled products designated by EPA. In addition, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13101 in September 1998, which called for an increase in the federal government's use of recycled-content and other environmentally preferable products.

Issued in May 1995, the first CPG designated 19 new products in seven product categories, including yard waste trimmings and hydraulic mulch. It also incorporated five previously designated items. Procuring agencies are required to purchase these items with recycled content. The first CPG update (CPG II) was published in November 1997, and designated an additional 12 items, including garden and soaker hoses and lawn and garden edging. A second CPG update (CPG III) was published in January 2000, and designated an additional 18 items, including food waste compost and plastic lumber landscaping timbers and posts.

Procuring agencies include all federal agencies, and any state or local government agency or government contractor that uses appropriated federal funds to purchase the designated items. If your agency spends more

than \$10,000 per year on a product designated in the CPG, you are required to purchase it with the highest recycled-content level practicable. The CPG also applies to lease contracts covering designated items.

Once designated, an agency has 1 year to develop an affirmative procurement program (or revise an existing one) for a designated item it purchases. By May 1, 1996, agencies were required to develop affirmative procurement programs to incorporate buy-recycled requirements for hydraulic mulch and yard trimmings compost. By November 13, 1998, agencies were required to revise their affirmative procurement programs to incorporate garden and soaker hoses and lawn and garden edging. Agencies also must revise their affirmative procurement program to add the items designated under CPG III by January 2001. This effort might involve reviewing specifications for these products and eliminating provisions that pose barriers to procuring them with recycled content (such as aesthetic requirements unrelated to product performance).

The CPG acknowledges, however, that specific circumstances might arise that preclude the purchase of products made with recovered materials. Your agency may purchase designated items that do not contain recovered materials if it determines that:

- 1) the price of a given designated item made with recovered materials is unreasonably high,
- 2) there is inadequate competition (not enough sources of supply),
- 3) unusual and unreasonable delays would result from obtaining the item, or
- 4) the recycled-content item does not meet the agency's reasonable performance specifications.



How Do I Purchase Recycled-Content Landscaping Products?

EPA issues guidance in RMANs, which are designed to make it as easy as possible to buy the designated items. The RMANs recommend recycled-content levels to look for when purchasing landscaping products, as shown in the chart below. Following the RMANs’ recommended levels will help ensure your affirmative procurement program and standards meet the buy-recycled requirements.

Rather than specifying just one level of recycled content, the RMANs recommend

ranges that reflect actual market conditions. The recommendations are based on market research identifying recycled-content products that are commercially available, are competitively priced, and meet buyers’ quality standards.

Refer to EPA’s availability list entitled “Landscaping Products Containing Recovered Materials” for sources of the designated landscaping items. See the last section of this fact sheet for this and other helpful resources.

The RMAN recommends recycled-content ranges at which the designated items are generally available in the marketplace.

EPA’s Recommended Content Levels for Landscaping Products

Landscaping Products	Recovered Material Content Recommendations
Hydraulic Mulch: —Paper —Wood/Paper	100% (postconsumer) 100% (total)
Compost Made From Yard Trimmings and/or FoodWaste	Purchase or use compost made from yard trimmings, leaves, grass clippings and/or foodwastes for applications such as landscaping, seeding of grass or other plants, as nutritious mulch under trees and shrubs, and in erosion control and soil reclamation. EPA further recommends implementing a composting system for these materials when agencies have an adequate volume and sufficient space.
Garden Hose: —Rubber and/or Plastic Soaker Hose: —Rubber and/or Plastic	60–65% (postconsumer) 60–70% (postconsumer)
Lawn and Garden Edging: —Rubber and/or Plastic	30–100% (postconsumer) /30–100% (total)
Landscaping Timber and Posts: —HDPE —Mixed Plastics/Sawdust —HDPE/Fiberglass —Other Mixed Resins	25–100% (postconsumer)/75–100% (total) 50% (postconsumer)/100% (total) 75% (postconsumer)/95% (total) 50–100% (postconsumer)/95–100% (total)



How Do I Purchase Recycled-Content Landscaping Products? (Continued)

Planting the Seeds: Hydraulic Mulch

You might be establishing wildflowers along an interstate or replanting grass on a public golf course. In either case, your first step is to plant the seeds. Hydraulic mulch is a quick, proven, and affordable way to help get the job done. Utilizing recovered newspaper and wood products, hydraulic mulch is commonly used in highway construction projects to grow grass along embankments, medians, and roadways. It also is used in recreational areas and on residential lawns. Through hydroseeding, a mixture of water, seeds, and hydraulic mulch is sprayed over soil. The mulch stabilizes the soil, prevents wind and water erosion, and provides protection and warmth for the seeds, helping them grow.

Be sure you require that contractors use hydraulic mulch for all your hydroseeding projects, where appropriate. Hydraulic mulch not only protects young seeds from the elements; it also strengthens demand for wood waste and the newspaper you recycle in your local recycling program.

CASE STUDY: Texas Department of Transportation

For more than 10 years, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) has used hydraulic mulch made from recovered newspaper and other recovered paper fibers in its seeding operations in highway construction. In 1998 alone, the agency used more than 2,000 tons of the product to establish vegetative cover along roadways and embankments. The agency has tested the product's performance and is pleased with the results. For more information, contact Paul Northcutt of TxDOT at 512 416-3091.

Strengthening the Soil: Yard Trimmings and Food Waste Compost

Used frequently in both commercial and residential landscaping, yard trimmings and food waste compost turns the organic waste we might otherwise throw away—such as grass, leaves, twigs, and fruit and vegetable trimmings—into an effective soil amendment. Compost returns nutrients to the soil, improves soil texture, and promotes new plant growth. Additionally, compost can suppress some plant diseases and prevent soil erosion when used as cover for seeded grass.

With an increase in the number of composting facilities from 651 in 1988 to more than 3,200 in 1996, the market is clearly growing for this valuable product. Even so, more yard trimmings and food waste could still be composted. In 1996,

CASE STUDY: Washington State Department of Transportation

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) first began using yard trimmings compost as a soil amendment in response to a 1992 legislative mandate. Since then, the department has used the material in a variety of roadside revegetation and restoration projects as well as in wetland mitigation sites. On any given project, the department uses between 100 and several thousand cubic yards of material. One project along Interstate 405, for example, used more than 2,900 cubic yards of compost to enrich the soil. The department also gives contractors clearing land the option of chipping trees and shrubs and leaving the material on site, saving hauling and disposal fees and returning this material back to the soil. The department has been very pleased with the performance of the yard trimmings compost and continues to increase its use of the material. For more information, contact Mark Maurer of WSDOT at 360 705-7242.



these valuable organic materials constituted more than 23 percent of our national waste stream, with 50 million tons generated, of which only about one fourth that amount (11 million tons) was recovered for composting.

Quenching Mother Nature's Thirst: Garden and Soaker Hoses

Once your seeds are planted and the soil is enhanced with nutrient-rich compost, nothing is more important than adequate watering. The questions of how much and how often to water are a matter of local climatic conditions, but one thing is clear—buying recycled-content garden and soaker hoses is the ideal choice for watering your garden or planted areas. Not only will these hoses deliver water to meet your garden's needs, they also help create new uses for old tires and recycled plastics from items such as discarded cable wires and old traffic cones.

CASE STUDY: Army Air Force Exchange Service

The Army Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) purchased more than 5.5 million feet of 65 percent postconsumer recovered-content soaker hose during the past 4 years, keeping thousands of scrap tires out of landfills. AAFES operates retail stores for active and retired members of the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force. Customers primarily use the product in gardening and landscaping projects on military bases and at private residences of military personnel. For more information, contact Carol Andrews of AAFES at 214 312-2236.

Building a Home for the Garden: Landscaping Timbers and Posts (Plastic Lumber)

To create attractive and effective landscaping, you'll need some construction skills as well as a green thumb. Raised beds, for example, will frame and protect flower beds. Framed walkways, bordered lawns, and flower beds all enhance the appearance of a landscape. Likewise, retaining walls can control erosion. Whether you're beautifying a park, highway, housing development, zoo, or the exterior of an office building, you can do it with recycled-content landscaping timbers and posts. The National Park Service is leading the way by planning more than a dozen projects with timbers and posts manufactured with plastic or composite lumber, which give new life to recovered wood and plastic materials such as milk jugs and plastic bags.

The Border Line: Lawn and Garden Edging

When you're ready to finish the job, recycled-content lawn and garden edging provides the perfect barrier for delineating your beds. Sold in both industrial and residential strengths, these quality products help keep grass and weeds out of flower and vegetable beds, saving time and money. You can purchase up to 100 percent postconsumer recycled-content edging, which is made from scrap rubber, milk jugs, and other plastic containers.

How Can I Get More Information?



Information Available From EPA

This fact sheet and the following publications on buying recycled-content products are available or can be accessed in electronic format on the Internet at <www.epa.gov/cpg>. Use Internet e-mail to order paper copies of documents. Include the requestor's name and mailing address on all orders. Address e-mail to: rcra-docket@epamail.epa.gov.

Paper copies also may be ordered by calling the RCRA Hotline. Callers within the Washington Metropolitan Area must dial 703 412-9810 or TDD 703 412-3323 (hearing impaired). Long-distance callers may call 800 424-9346 or TDD 800 553-7672. The RCRA Hotline operates weekdays, from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., e.s.t.

- ❖ **EPA Expands Comprehensive Procurement Guideline (CPG)** (EPA530-F-00-017). This fact sheet provides general information about the CPG and the development of affirmative procurement programs.
- ❖ **Federal Register (FR)** notices promulgating CPG I (60 FR 21370/EPA530-Z-95-006) and RMAN I (60 FR 21386/EPA530-Z-95-007), May 1, 1995. FR notices promulgating CPG II (62 FR 60961/EPA530-Z-97-009) and RMAN II (62 FR 60975/EPA530-Z-97-010), November 13, 1997. FR notices promulgating CPG III (65 FR 3070) and RMAN III (65 FR 3082), January 19, 2000.
- ❖ **Landscaping Products Containing Recovered Materials** (EPA530-B-99-015). This list identifies sources of landscaping products containing recovered materials.
- ❖ EPA has also developed a presentation folder that highlights new and innovative uses for compost (EPA530-F-97-047). The following compost fact sheets are available from EPA:
 - **Innovative Uses of Compost—Bioremediation and Pollution Prevention** (EPA530-F-97-042).
 - **Innovative Uses of Compost—Erosion Control, Turf Remediation, and Landscaping** (EPA530-F-97-043).
 - **Innovative Uses of Compost—Disease Control for Plants and Animals** (EPA530-F-97-044).
 - **Innovative Uses of Compost—Composting of Soils Contaminated by Explosives** (EPA530-F-97-045).
 - **Innovative Uses of Compost—Reforestation, Wetlands Restoration, and Habitat Revitalization** (EPA530-F-97-046).

- ❖ **A Study of State and Local Government Procurement Practices that Consider Environmental Performance of Goods and Services** (EPA742-R-96-007). This report provides important program elements and case studies of state and county agencies purchasing environmentally preferable products and services. For a copy of the report or more information on EPA's Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) program, contact the Pollution Prevention Information Clearinghouse at 401 M Street, SW. (7409), Washington, DC 20460. Phone: 202 260-1023. Fax: 202 260-4659. Visit the EPP Web site at <www.epa.gov/oppt/epp>.



Other Sources of Information

- ❖ **Buy Recycled Business Alliance.** The Alliance includes over 3,200 companies and organizations committed to increasing their use of recycled-content products and materials in their day-to-day operations. The Alliance offers educational materials, a quarterly newsletter, and product-specific guides. Public purchasing entities can join for free. For more information, contact Kevin Barry, National Recycling Coalition, 1727 King Street, Suite 105, Alexandria, VA 22314-2720. Phone: 703 683-9025, Ext. 210. Fax: 703 683-9026. Web site: www.nrc-recycle.org E-mail: brbainfo@nrc-recycle.org.
- ❖ **The Composting Council.** The Composting Council offers educational materials and workshops on composting and seeks to develop standards for compost. For more information, contact the organization at 114 South Pitt Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Phone: 703 739-2401. Fax: 703 739-2407. Web site: www.composter.com/composting/compcouncil/
- ❖ **U.S. General Services Administration (GSA).** GSA publishes various supply catalogs, guides, and schedules for recycled-content products available through the Federal Supply Service. For copies of the following document and other information, contact GSA, Centralized Mailing List Service (7CAFL), 4900 Hemphill Street, P.O. Box 6477, Fort Worth, TX 76115-9939. Phone: 817 334-5215. Fax: 817 334-5561. You can also access GSA Advantage!, GSA's Internet-based online ordering system, to order any GSA product at <www.fss.gsa.gov/cgi-bin/advwel>.



— **Environmental Products Guide.** This guide is designed to help procurement officials identify environmentally preferable products and services. It contains nearly 3,000 items, including many recycled-content products.

- ❖ **Green Seal.** Green Seal is a national nonprofit labeling organization that sets environmental standards, including those for garden hoses, and awards a Green Seal of Approval to products meeting those standards. For more information, contact Green Seal at 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW., Suite 827, Washington, DC 20036. Phone: 202 872-6400. Fax: 202 872-4324. Web site: www.green Seal.org
- ❖ **Greening the Government: A Guide to Implementing Executive Order 12873.** This guide provides detailed information on establishing and implementing federal affirmative procurement plans. Updated in the summer of 1997, it is available without charge from the Office of the Federal Environmental Executive, Ariel Rios Building, Mail Code 1600S, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460. Phone: 202 564-1297. Fax: 202 564-1393. Web site: www.ofee.gov
You can also download an electronic version on the Internet at www.ofee.gov/html/guide/html.
- ❖ **Official Recycled Products Guide.** This directory lists more than 5,000 manufacturers and distributors of recycled-content products. Contact: Recycling Data Management Corporation, P.O. Box 577, Ogdensburg, NY 13669. Phone: 800 267-0707. Fax: 315 471-3258.
- ❖ **Recycled Plastic Products Source Book.** Recycled Plastic Products Source Book. This booklet lists more than 1,300 plastic products from approximately 300 manufacturers. For more information, call the American Plastics Council (APC), 1801 K Street, NW., Suite 7010, Washington, DC 20006. Phone: 202 974-5400. Fax: 202 296-7119. Visit the APC Web site at www.plasticsresource.com.
- ❖ **Recycled Rubber Products Catalog.** This catalog lists products manufactured from recovered rubber and provides information on how to obtain them. For more information, contact the Scrap Tire Management Council, 1400 K Street, NW., Suite 900, Washington, DC 20005. Phone: 202 682-4880. Fax: 202 682-4854. The catalog can be viewed on the Internet at www.rma.org/recycledcatalogn.html.
- ❖ **Products and Services Directory.** This publication lists manufacturers of erosion control products, including hydraulic mulch. For more information, contact the International Erosion Control Association, P.O. Box 774904, Steamboat Springs, CO 80477. Phone: 800 455-4322. Fax: 970 879-8563. Web site: www.ieca.org



Internet Sites

Government Sites

- ❖ **The Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines:** www.epa.gov/cpg. This site describes EPA's effort to facilitate the procurement of products containing recovered materials, including information on CPG, RMANs, and the Buy-Recycled Series.
- ❖ **Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP):** www.epa.gov/oppt/epp. EPA's Environmentally Preferable Purchasing program encourages and assists federal agencies to purchase environmentally preferable products and services. The site explains EPA's guiding principles for including environmental performance in purchasing decision-making, and posts case studies of successful pilot projects in both the public and private sectors.
- ❖ **Federal Trade Commission:** www.ftc.gov/bcp/gnrnrule/guides980427.htm. The Federal Trade Commission issued Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims in May 1998.
- ❖ **Jobs Through Recycling:** www.epa.gov/jtr. EPA's Jobs Through Recycling program stimulates economic growth and recycling market development by assisting businesses and supporting a network of state and regional recycling contacts. This Web site provides information on financing and technical assistance for recycling businesses as well as other market development tools.
- ❖ **King County Recycled Product Procurement Program:** www.metrokc.gov/oppis/recyclea.html. This site describes the tools and techniques developed by King County, Washington, agencies for purchasing recycled products.
- ❖ **Municipal Solid Waste:** www.epa.gov/msw. This site includes information on recycling, source reduction, and reuse. Contains state municipal solid waste data and the latest facts and figures on waste generation and disposal.
- ❖ **WasteWise:** www.epa.gov/wastewise. WasteWise is a free, voluntary EPA program through which organizations eliminate costly municipal solid waste, benefitting their bottom line and the environment. The program provides hands-on assistance to members to help them purchase or manufacture recycled-content products, prevent waste, and recycle solid waste materials.

How Can I Get More Information? (Continued)

Product Information

❖ Recycling Data Network Information Services:

<www.epa.gov/cpg/links.htm>. This commercial Web site provides access, on a subscription basis, to a recycled-content products database of over 4,500 listings in 700 product classifications. It also provides a reference library and a newsletter. Managed by the publisher of the Official Recycled Products Guide, the product database is considered to be the largest of its kind.

❖ California Recycled-Content Product Database:

<www.ciwmb.ca.gov/RCP>. This site contains information on why to buy recycled-content products, how to procure them, and provides access to a database with information on

products, as well as manufacturers, distributors, reprocessors, mills, and converters across the country who procure or produce these products.

❖ Fedmarket Procurement Assistance Jumpstation:

<www.fedmarket.com/sales_resources/bids/federal.html>. This site contains links to many sites containing procurement information.

In addition, contact your state solid waste management agency for information about local and regional businesses that produce or distribute recycled-content products.

United States
Environmental Protection Agency
(5306W)
Ariel Rios Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW,
Washington, DC 20460
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