



# 2000 Buy-Recycled Series Paper Products



**T**en years ago, very little recycled-content printing and writing paper existed. Now, it's readily available, along with recycled-content newsprint, paper towels, and corrugated packaging—and at higher quality and more competitive prices than ever before. That's in part due to government initiatives since 1988, when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued the Procurement Guideline for Paper and Paper Products Containing Recovered Materials. The 1988 paper guideline's buy-recycled requirements are now part of EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guideline (CPG).



To make it easier to buy recycled, EPA updates the 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. Among these items, EPA has designated many paper products. 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. In May 1995 EPA published the Paper Products RMAN, and in June 1998 EPA updated the recommendations for paper products in the Paper Products RMAN II, which incorporates all current requirements for recycled-content papers.

Although federal agencies have made great strides in buying recycled-content paper, more can be done. After all, paper is still the most predominant material in our trash. So, the next time you stock up on paper for your printer, copy machine, cafeteria, or restrooms, buy recycled. You'll help create a demand for the used office paper, old newspapers, and boxes we recycle every day.

EcoPurchasing means  
considering attributes  
such as

- ❖  
recycled content
- toxicity
- reusability
- durability
- repairability

❖  
before you buy  
a product.





## What Is The CPG?

**The CPG requires federal agencies to give preference to items made from recovered materials.**

**R**ecycling is more than just dropping off your cans, bottles, and newspapers at the curb or at the 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 the 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. Moreover, it created a requirement that all agencies purchase 30-percent postconsumer paper on or before December 31, 1998.

Issued in May 1995, the first CPG designated 19 new products and incorporated five previously designated items (including paper and paper products) in seven product categories. Procuring agencies are required to purchase these items with recycled content. The first CPG update (CPG II) was published in November 1997, but designated no new paper products. A second CPG update (CPG III) was published in January 2000 but it also designated no new paper products.

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 June 22, 1989, agencies were required to develop affirmative procurement programs to incorporate buy-recycled requirements for paper and paper products. Agencies can still develop or modify their programs if they haven't already done so. This effort might involve reviewing specifications for those 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 Paper Products?

## Key Terms

**B**efore buying recycled-content paper products meeting EPA's recommendations, you'll need to understand some important terms.

### Postconsumer fiber:

- Is the paper recovered in our homes and offices.
- Does not include newsstand returns and printers' overruns.

### Recovered fiber:

- Includes scrap generated at mills after the end of the papermaking process; converting and printing scrap; newsstand returns and printers' overruns; obsolete inventory of mills, printers, and others; damaged stock; and postconsumer fiber.
- Is not waste. EPA has replaced the term *waste paper* used in the 1988 guidelines with *recovered fiber*, to acknowledge that this material is a valuable resource.
- Must be repulped. Paper cannot simply be re-cut or repackaged to count as recovered-content paper.
- Does not include forest residues such as sawdust and wood chips from forestry operations.

### Mill broke:

- Is scrap generated in a mill prior to the completion of the papermaking process.
- EPA recommends that you allow mills to count the recycled-content portion of mill broke. You should not count the nonrecycled-content portion, however.

## Recycled-Content Recommendations

**T**he *Paper Products RMAN II* recommends recycled-content levels that you can look for when purchasing paper products, as shown in the chart on the following pages. Use EPA's RMAN recommendations as a starting point. The recommendations are based on market research used to identify recycled-content products that are commercially available.

Rather than specifying just one level of recycled content, the RMAN recommends ranges for many paper products, which reflect what is currently available in the United States. The recycled content of paper products varies; therefore, you should contact local paper mills or merchants to determine product availability. Try to purchase paper containing the highest content that is available to you.

When buying paper other than printing and writing paper, specify that you want paper "containing X percent recovered fiber, including Y percent postconsumer fiber." (For most printing and writing papers, you can simply say you're looking for 30 percent postconsumer content.)

In addition, make sure you measure recovered and postconsumer fiber content as a percentage of the weight of all **fiber** in the paper, not as a percentage of the total weight of the sheet. (The total weight also includes the weight of dyes, fillers, and water used in the manufacturing process.)

The RMAN recommends recycled-content levels to look for when purchasing paper products.

## RMAN Levels for Paper Products

Item	Notes	Recovered Content (%)	Post-consumer Content (%)
<b>Printing and Writing Papers</b>			
Reprographic	Business papers such as bond, electrostatic, copy, mimeo, duplicator, and reproduction	30	30
Offset	Used for book publishing, commercial printing, direct mail, technical documents, and manuals	30	30
Tablet	Office paper such as note pads and notebooks	30	30
Forms bond	Bond type papers used for business forms such as continuous, cash register, sales book, unit sets, and computer printout, excluding carbonless	30	30
Envelope	Wove	30	30
	Kraft, white and colored (including manila)	10–20	10–20
	Kraft, unbleached	10	10
	Excludes custom envelopes		
Cotton fiber	High-quality papers used for stationery, invitations, currency, ledgers, maps, and other specialty items	30	30
Text and cover	Premium papers used for cover stock, books, and stationery and matching envelopes	30	30
Supercalendered	Groundwood paper used for advertising and mail order inserts, catalogs, and some magazines	10	10
Machine finished groundwood	Groundwood paper used in magazines and catalogs	10	10
Papeteries	Used for invitations and greeting cards	30	30
Check safety	Used in the manufacture of commercial and government checks	10	10
Coated	Used for annual reports, posters, brochures, and magazines. Have gloss, dull, or matte finishes	10	10
Carbonless	Used for multiple-impact copy forms	30	30
File folders	Manila or colored	30	30
Dyed filing products	Used for multicolored hanging folders and wallet files	20–50	20
Index and card stock	Used for index cards and postcards	50	20
Pressboard	High-strength paperboard used in binders and report covers	50	20
Tags and tickets	Used for toll and lottery tickets, licenses, and identification and tabulating cards	20–50	20



Item	Notes	Recovered Content (%)	Post-consumer Content (%)
<b>Newsprint</b>			
Newsprint	Groundwood paper used in newspapers	20–100	20–85
<b>Commercial Sanitary Tissue Products</b>			
Bathroom tissue	Used in rolls or sheets	20–100	20–60
Paper towels	Used in rolls or sheets	40–100	40–60
Paper napkins	Used in food service applications	30–100	30–60
Facial tissue	Used for personal care	10–100	10–15
General-purpose industrial wipers	Used in cleaning and wiping applications	40–100	40
<b>Paperboard and Packaging Products</b>			
Corrugated containers (<300 psi) (300 psi)	Used for packaging and shipping a variety of goods	25–50 25–30	25–50 25–30
Solid fiber boxes	Used for specialized packaging needs such as dynamite packaging and army ration boxes	40	40
Folding cartons	Used to package a wide variety of foods, household products, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, detergent, and hardware	100	40–80
Industrial paperboard	Used to create tubes, cores, cans, and drums	100	45–100
Miscellaneous	Includes “chipboard” pad backings, book covers, covered binders, mailing tubes, game boards, and puzzles	90–100	75–100
Padded mailers	Made from kraft paper that is usually brown but can be bleached white	5–15	5–15
Carrierboard	A type of folding carton designed for multipack beverage cartons	10–100	10–15
Brown papers	Used for bags and wrapping paper	5–40	5–20
<b>Miscellaneous Paper Products</b>			
Tray liners	Used to line food service trays. Often contain printed information	100	50–75

Remember to specify recycled-content papers in printing and janitorial contracts.

### Paper Buying Tips

To make it even easier to buy recycled-content paper products, EPA offers the following purchasing tips for the various paper product categories outlined in the RMAN.

**Printing and writing papers** comprise one of the largest categories of paper and paper products. Examples include stationery, computer printout paper, note pads, copier paper, and offset paper. Printing and writing papers can be uncoated or coated.

When buying printing and writing paper, remember to:

- Work with your printer. Different papers exhibit differences in performance and printability. Some printers might first want to test certain papers with a particular ink. Printers also can help you select papers based on how they will be used (i.e., whether they will be folded, die-cut, or made into self-mailers).
- Work with your graphic designer. Some papers are better than others for certain design needs. Make sure both the designer and printer agree that the paper you choose will meet your expectations.
- Consider the environmental ramifications of your purchasing decisions. Papers with certain characteristics, such as deep colors, coatings, or groundwood content, might not be recyclable in your existing office paper recycling program or might require changes to the program. Consider the effects of your paper purchases before deciding to purchase a specific paper.

**Newsprint** is a type of groundwood paper generally used to print newspapers. Recycled-content newsprint is usually manufactured from fiber recovered from old newspapers and magazines. The federal government uses newsprint for printing the *Federal Register*, *Congressional Record*, and other publications.

When purchasing newsprint, consider these helpful hints:

- Pay attention to newsprint's basis weight. Basis weight is the weight in pounds of a ream of paper cut to a specified size. Different weights hold up better in different presses. Recycled-content newsprint ranging from 25 to 32 pounds generally performs well. The U.S. Government Printing Office specifies 28 pound recycled-content newsprint.
- Consider your requirements for the newsprint you're buying. Recycled-content newsprint manufacturers are making products that meet their clients' performance requirements (e.g., printability, brightness, cleanliness, and opacity).
- Determine whether newsprint is recyclable in your existing recycling program. Some office paper recycling programs do not accept groundwood papers such as newsprint; find out whether yours does before you buy newsprint.





**Sanitary tissue products** include bathroom and facial tissue, paper towels, napkins, and general-purpose industrial wipers. When purchasing these products remember these tips:

- Avoid misconceptions about softness, absorbency, and strength. Some recycled-content sanitary tissue products are softer, stronger, and more absorbent than others. Consider your aesthetic and functional requirements for tissue products before purchasing a specific product.
- Remember to review your janitorial supply contracts because commercial tissue products are often purchased through contractors. Make sure your supply contracts specify recycled-content, not virgin, products.
- When changing brands, consider other factors that could influence your purchasing decision. When switching from sheet to roll paper towels, for example, you might incur costs to replace dispensers or fixtures if such costs are not borne by the supplier.



**Paperboard and packaging** is a broad category of paper products that includes corrugated containers, folding cartons, book and report covers, mailing tubes, video cassette boxes, paper bags, and wrapping paper. They can be manufactured with a wide variety of recovered fibers including old newspapers, old corrugated containers, mixed papers, and sorted white office paper. In fact, paperboard mills use more recovered fiber than any other segment of the paper industry.

When purchasing recycled-content paperboard and packaging consider these tips:

- Remember, you can print on recycled boxes, not just on virgin, bleached boxes.
- Be aware that you can use recycled boxes in food applications and still meet Food and Drug Administration requirements.



**Determine whether your existing recycling program includes newsprint and packaging.**



# How Do 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](http://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](mailto: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, and the Paper Products RMAN (60 FR 26986/EPA530-Z-96-005), May 29, 1996. 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, and the Paper Products RMAN II (63 FR 31214), June 8, 1998. FR notices promulgating CPG III (65 FR 3070) and RMAN III (65 FR 3082), January 19, 2000.
- ❖ **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 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](http://www.epa.gov/oppt/epp)>.

- ❖ **Mills, Converters, and Distributors of Printing and Writing Paper Containing Postconsumer Recovered Fiber** (EPA530-R-99-006).
- ❖ **Mills That Produce Newsprint Containing Postconsumer Recovered Paper** (EPA530-B-99-013).
- ❖ **Mills That Produce Tissue Products Containing Recovered Paper** (EPA530-B-99-012).



## Other Sources of Information

- ❖ **U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)**. GSA's Environmental Products Guide contains more than 1,500 paper and paper products containing recovered materials. For a copy of the guide, contact GSA, Centralized Mailing List Service (7CPNL), 401 West Felix Street, P.O. Box 6477, Fort Worth, TX 76115. Phone: 817 334-5215. Fax: 817 334-5227.
- ❖ **U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO)**. GPO provides a variety of recycled-content printing papers to federal agencies. To view federal printing paper specifications see the GPO Web site at <[www.access.gpo.gov/qualitycontrol/paperspecs/index.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/qualitycontrol/paperspecs/index.html)>. For more information about papers available from GPO, contact Doris Reynolds, Printing Specialist, U.S. GPO, Paper and Materials Control Section, Stop POL, North Capitol and H Streets, NW., Washington, DC 20401. Phone: 202 512-0241.
- ❖ **The Official Recycled Products Guide**. This directory lists more than 5,000 manufacturers and distributors of recycled-content products. For more information, contact the Recycling Data Management Corp., P.O. Box 577, Ogdensburg, NY 13669. Phone: 800 267-0707.
- ❖ **Recycling at Work Campaign**. The Recycling at Work Campaign has published several guidebooks on setting up and promoting office buy-recycled and recycling programs. For more information, contact Geri Powell of the Recycling at Work Campaign, 1620 Eye Street, NW., Sixth Floor, Washington, DC 20006. Phone: 202 293-7330 Ext. 774. Fax: 202 429-0422.

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

United States  
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