



Purchasing Guide – for a sustainable office

This document is a guide to sustainable procurement practices in Nelson City and Tasman District. Its purpose is to summarise knowledge from across New Zealand and match it to the local area.

The guide focuses on standard office materials and is regularly updated. The most up to date version is available on the Waste Education Services website www.wes.org.nz/business-resources

This version contains details on:

- office paper – updated 31 May 2010
- toner & ink cartridges – updated 31 May 2010
- office machines: printers, copiers, faxes and multifunction devices – added 31 May 2010
- computers – updated 31 May 2010
- soaps & cleaning chemicals – updated 31 May 2010
- fair-trade products – updated 31 May 2010

WasteWise Purchasing Policy

A “WasteWise” purchasing policy helps to establish an organisations’ commitment to taking action to reduce waste at source and to communicate the action to staff. Consideration of the whole life costs of items should be accounted for – it may be cheaper and more sustainable to pay more for a higher quality item up front rather than continuously replacing cheaper and less durable items more often. The following is an example for you to adapt to your business’ needs.

Our business will:

REDUCE:

- **Only buy things we really need**
 - *Are we paying for features that we don't need and won't use?*
 - *Have we considered leasing/sharing or swapping rather than buying?*
 - *Is upgrading, reconditioning or extending the life of our current model a better option?*
- **Buy items that are long lasting, even if they may cost more initially**
 - *Rechargeable batteries*
 - *Rewritable cd/dvd's*
 - *Consider how long this product will last compared to another model?*
- **Buy items that are energy-efficient**
 - *Energy-saving light bulbs*
 - *Computers*
 - *Hybrid or other more fuel efficient vehicles*
- **Use the energy efficient options available**
 - *Configure the Power Management facilities within office PCs*

- *Drive efficiently and within speed limits*
- **Buy in bulk to reduce packaging**
- **When printing consider**
 - *Printing double-sided*
 - *Only printing when necessary – otherwise read on the screen*
 - *Reducing the margins and adjust fonts to maximise paper use*
- **Use email to communicate where possible**
- **Use washable cups/mugs rather than plastic/polystyrene ones**

REUSE

- **Reuse everything we can:**
 - *The back of used paper: keep used A4 paper flat in a box for scrap paper, or next to the photocopier for internal photocopying*
 - *Disks, CDs, DVDs*
 - *Envelopes - use envelope sealers*
 - *Food scraps – compost, feed to worm farm or use Bokashi*
- **Buy products that are packaged in reusable materials**
- **Encourage staff to bring lunches in reusable containers and take their waste home**
- **Use a waste exchange service or the local paper to advertise items that could be reused by someone and to look for items that you could use**
- **Take items to the local re-use shop**

RECYCLE

- **Recycle as much as possible of what we cannot reuse: printer cartridges, paper, plastic containers, tins, cardboard, mobile phones etc.**
- **Buy products that are recycled and/or recyclable:**
 - *Unbleached, recycled printing/office paper*
 - *Unbleached, recycled toilet paper*
- **Buy products that are packaged minimally in recyclable materials, such as paper and cardboard**

RECOGNISE

- **Recognise the efforts and achievements of everyone (staff and customers) involved in the waste reduction programme.**
- **During tenders and placement of contracts, recognise the environmental performance track record of competing companies, e.g. ISO 14001, whether they can demonstrate their internal waste reduction and energy management procedure**
- **Source local and/or New Zealand made products**

REVISE

- **Revise our policies and practices regularly to make sure we are reducing waste as efficiently as we can.**

RECORD

- **Record any changes we make in purchasing and calculate the savings—both environmental and financial.**

REJOICE!

- **Publicise our success and celebrate!**

Office Paper

The environmental impact of the paper we use is a factor of more than its recycled content. The impacts arise from:

- Managing and harvesting of the forest
- Producing pulp and paper
- Processing the paper product as waste
- Processing production waste
- Post-consumer waste.

The Ministry for the Environment has created a Paper Buyers Guide. This covers office, commercial printing and hygiene paper. It uses a star rating system (5 is the most sustainable) and factors in whether the pulp is legally harvested; the percentage of pulp from sustainable sources; the bleaching method used etc. It is available from <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/sustainable-industry/paper-products/>

Recommendations:

Note:

1. Star ratings have been taken from the MfE Paper Buyers Guide listed above (5 star is the highest environmental performance)

Product	Suppliers	Star Rating
EXP Green 50% Recycled	Corporate Express	*****
OfficeMax 100% Recycled	Office Max	*****
Reflex 50% Recycled	Office Max / Warehouse Stationery / Office Products Depot / Corporate Consumables / Corporate Express	*****
Xerox Recycled Supreme	Fuji Zerox Ltd.	*****
Australian 80	Corporate Express / Office Max	****
Canon 100% Recycled	Canon NZ Ltd	****
Evolve	Corporate Consumables/ Corporate Express/ Office Max	****
Reflex 100% Recycled	Corporate Express / Warehouse Stationery	****

Toner & Ink Cartridges

The following information has been taken from the Ministry for the Environment's website at <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/sustainable-industry/govt3/topic-areas/office-consumables/toners.html> Please check this site for further advice.

Printing, copying and faxing are common activities in the office environment.

A major consumable from this activity is toner or ink cartridges. This has environmental implications with regard to resource efficiency, toxic materials, and waste generation.

Users of toner and ink cartridges who wish to help reduce these impacts can choose to take the actions recommended on this website. They give effect to core sustainability principles:

Core Sustainability principles	Recommended actions
Refer to ecolabels	<p>Prefer products with an Environmental Choice NZ license (EC-30-05 Toner cartridges) or other third-party audited life cycle ecolabel, or can show that they meet similar criteria.</p> <p><i>[eg, Good Environmental Choice (Australia), Nordic Swan, EU Flower or Blue Angel (Europe), EcoMark (Japan).</i></p> <p><i>EMS labels such as ISO 14001, EMAS, or EnviroMark are not equivalent, as they do not demonstrate impact reduction.]</i></p>
Buy recycled	Prefer remanufactured cartridges with a performance guarantee, or new cartridges containing post-consumer recycled content.
Maximise resource efficiency	<p>Reduce your demand for printing, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use electronic versions instead of paper copies. • Set fonts and margins to improve efficiency of printing.
Reduce waste to landfill	<p>Send your used toner cartridges to a recycling programme. (Take-back systems are offered through the major office supply companies as well as some office equipment suppliers).</p> <p>Prefer packaging which has recycled content and is recyclable.</p>

Organisations that choose to implement the recommended actions also contribute to other core sustainability principles, as follows:

Energy efficiency	Choosing life cycle ecolabelled products and/or remanufactured or recycled content cartridges supports energy efficiency.
Reduce toxics	Choosing life cycle ecolabelled products ensures that toxic components in toner and other ingredients is minimised.
Benefits of recycling and remanufactured cartridges	<p>Recycling and remanufacturing toner cartridges helps to reduce a number of environmental impacts at once. They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • divert plastic and metal waste from landfill • help support a viable market for materials recycling • reduce resource extraction and manufacturing-related impacts • reduce net energy use and contribution to climate change. <p>For many laser printer models, when you replace the toner cartridge you are replacing the whole print engine, which is very wasteful without some form of remanufacturing or recycling.</p> <p>Life cycle analysis data is limited, but when good-quality guaranteed performance remanufactured cartridges are compared with original cartridges net benefits for energy and materials use are shown.</p> <p>The Ministry for the Environment recommends that remanufactured cartridges with guaranteed performance be sought. The Ministry has purchased such cartridges and found them to be as problem-free as original cartridges, and of significantly lower cost. If any problem with the printing equipment can be shown to have arisen from using a guaranteed remanufactured cartridge, then the cartridge remanufacturer addresses the situation under their warranty. Damage that cannot be shown to have been caused by using remanufactured cartridges remains subject to the original equipment warranty.</p>

Office machines: printers, copiers, faxes and multifunction devices

The following information has been taken from the Ministry for the Environment website at <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/sustainable-industry/govt3/topic-areas/office-consumables/office-machines.html> Please check this site for further advice.

Office machines other than computers – such as copiers, printers, fax machines and multifunction devices – are essential to modern office work. However, their manufacture, use of consumables and their disposal can cause damage to the environment.

It is important to realise that the consumables used with some of these machines can have far greater impacts than the machines themselves. [For example](#), it takes ten times more energy to manufacture a piece of paper than it does to copy an image onto it.

Environmental impacts of office machines can be reduced through taking actions such as the ones recommended below.

Core sustainability procurement principles	Recommended actions
Refer to ecolabels	<p>Prefer products which have an Environmental Choice New Zealand licence (EC-24-05 Copying Machines, Printers, Fax Machines and Multifunction Devices, comply with other third-party audited life cycle ecolabel criteria (eg, Nordic Swan, EU Flower, Blue Angel), or can meet equivalent criteria.</p> <p>Accreditations such as ISO 14001, EMAS or EnviroMark do not demonstrate impact reduction. They indicate that a company has the management systems in place that should support impact reduction.</p>
Reduce toxics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting the ecolabel criteria (above) will help to reduce levels of potentially toxic materials. • Prefer products that can fully meet or do better than the requirements of the Restriction on the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (RoHS). The supplier should be able to provide documentation that shows compliance.
Energy efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products should be Energy Star compliant. For the most recent international criteria, see www.energystar.gov (select 'products' in the menu). There is a 12-month lag time for these standards to be officially in effect in Australia. Compliant Australasian products are listed on www.energystar.gov.au. The New Zealand site is at www.energystar.govt.nz. • Products which meet third-party audited life-cycle ecolabel criteria will be Energy Star compliant. • Where possible, select products which are better than the Energy Star standard, and prefer those using the lowest number of watts for idle, sleep and standby (off) modes. • Ensure energy conservation features (eg, timing for sleep mode) are enabled. When the machine is not in use, an automatic 'low power' mode can conserve most of the energy required for the 'idle' mode. To fully maximise energy conservation, turn off the machine at the end of the working day.
Maximise resource efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain maximum lifespan from equipment before replacing. Consider lease or print service contracts rather than buying arrangements. • Consider buying one multifunction machine rather than multiple machines for multiple functions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimise paper use. Encourage staff to use electronic rather than hard copy versions. Prefer machines capable of duplexing (two-sided copying) and two-up pages (two pages to a page for drafts), and encourage staff to use these options.
Reduce waste to landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer suppliers that offer an end-of-life disposal programme which maximises recycling. Consider whether surplus equipment may be able to be reused through a recycling firm, sale to staff or donation to community groups. • Prefer suppliers who provide products in packaging which has recycled content and is recyclable, and will take away the packaging for recycling after delivery. • Products which meet third-party audited life cycle ecolabel criteria will be designed for better end-of-life recycling or reuse, and have recycled content and/or recyclable packaging. • Recycle all waste paper and toner cartridges from printing devices. • Use toner cartridges that minimise impacts.
Buy recycled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer suppliers who provide products in packaging which has recycled content and is recyclable. (Products which meet third-party audited life cycle ecolabel criteria will meet these criteria.) • Where available, prefer remanufactured equipment with performance guarantees, such as on lease or print service contracts. • Prefer recycled-content paper and machines with warranties that allow for use of suitable grade recycled-content paper. • Prefer remanufactured toner cartridges with performance guarantees and machines with warranties that allow their use.

For further information, look at the following resources.

- [Green Office Guide – a guide to help you buy and use environmentally friendly equipment](#) (Australian government)
- [Office products – guide to sustainable purchasing and use](#) (New South Wales, Australia)

Computers

The following information has been taken from the Ministry for the Environment website at <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/sustainable-industry/govt3/topic-areas/office-consumables/computers.html> Please check this site for further advice.

Computers are an essential part of work and modern life. However the manufacturing, use and disposal of computers can damage the environment. Examples include air and water pollution from resource extraction and manufacturing, impacts on worker health, contribution to climate change (energy for manufacture and using the computer), and toxic materials released after disposal (e.g. lead, cadmium, mercury, hexavalent chromium, brominated flame retardants).

These impacts can be reduced by taking actions such as:

Core sustainability procurement principles	Recommended actions
Refer to ecolabels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer products which have an Environmental Choice NZ license (EC-27-05 Computers – www.enviro-choice.org.nz), comply with other third-party audited life cycle ecolabel criteria (e.g.: TCO, Nordic Swan, EU Flower, Blue Angel), or can meet equivalent criteria. • Products with silver or above in the Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) database meet many equivalent criteria (www.epeat.net). <p>Note: ECMA TR-70 or IT-Eco declarations report categories of data that may be used to show that ecolabel-equivalent criteria can be met.</p> <p>Accreditations such as ISO 14001, EMAS, or EnviroMark do not demonstrate impact reduction. They indicate that a company has the management systems in place that should support impact reduction.</p>
Reduce toxics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting the ecolabel criteria (above) will help to reduce levels of potentially toxic materials. • Prefer products that can fully meet or do better than the requirements of the Restriction on the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (RoHS – see www.rohs.gov.uk). The supplier should be able to provide documentation of compliance.
Energy efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products should be Energy Star compliant. For the most recent international criteria, see www.energystar.gov (select “products” in the menu). There is a 12 month lag time for these standards to be officially in effect in Australia. Compliant Australasian products are listed on www.energystar.gov.au. The New Zealand site is at www.energystar.govt.nz. • Products meeting third party life cycle ecolabel criteria comply with Energy Star. • Where possible, select products which are better than the Energy Star standard, and use the lowest number of watts for idle, sleep and standby (off) modes. <p>After purchase -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that energy conservation features (e.g. timing for sleep mode) are enabled. When the computer is not in use, an automatic

	<p>“sleep” mode can conserve up to 90% of the energy required. To maximise energy conservation, turn off the computer and monitor completely at the end of the working day. Microsoft programmes have integrated ‘power management tools’ – ensure your staff know how to use these options.</p>
Maximise resource efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain maximum lifespan from equipment before replacing: where possible upgrade existing units rather than buying new. Consider rotations for computer fleet replacement of longer than three years. Consider lease rather than buy arrangements. • Look for products that provide the required function with smaller and lighter equipment (e.g. smaller or integrated units, laptops instead of larger computers, flat screens instead of CRTs (cathode ray tubes). Many of these resource efficient options also use less energy to operate.
Reduce waste to landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer suppliers that offer an end-of-life disposal programme which maximises recycling and safe disposal, including Basel Convention compliance for exports, as required. • Consider whether surplus equipment may be able to be reused through a computer recycling firm, sale to staff, auction, or donation to community groups. • Where a supplier recycling programme or reuse outlet is unavailable, ensure that you pay for correct disposal (e.g. removal of hazardous materials such as lead and mercury from monitors before disposal).
Buy recycled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer suppliers who provide products in packaging which has recycled content and is recyclable. • Products meeting third party life cycle ecolabel criteria usually have recycled/recyclable content packaging. • Computers with recycled content parts are preferred, but are not currently available in the New Zealand market. Expressing a preference for computers with recycled content parts will encourage the supplier to make these models available to the New Zealand market.

For further information, look at the following resources.

- [Green Office Guide – a guide to help you buy and use environmentally friendly equipment](#) (Australian government)
- [Office products – guide to sustainable purchasing and use](#) (New South Wales, Australia)

Soaps & cleaning chemicals

The following information has been taken from the Ministry for the Environment website at <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/sustainable-industry/govt3/topic-areas/office-consumables/soap-cleaning.html> Please check this site for further advice.

Cleaning products are essential for maintaining a hygienic environment. However, their chemical content and the process of manufacture and disposal can pose hazardous risks to the environment and to human health.

Cleaning products used indoors are typically washed down drains to treatment plants where biodegradable toxic compounds may break down to safer chemicals but non-biodegradable toxic chemicals will pass through untreated. Products used outdoors will make their way to storm water drainage systems. Both routes will contribute to pollution of our natural environment. The manufacturing process and disposal of chemicals and packaging also present an avenue for toxic chemicals to pollute the environment.

Cleaners frequently handle toxic chemicals and are at a high risk of inhaling toxic fumes and burns to eyes and skin. The products also contribute to indoor air pollution which can cause allergic reactions and other health effects to office workers.

It is therefore important to consider the environmental and the health of cleaners and building occupants, as well as price and performance when choosing a product. To reduce impacts, purchasers can choose to take the recommended actions listed below. They give effect to core Govt3 principles.

Core Govt3 principles	Recommended actions
Refer to ecolabels	Prefer products with an Environmental Choice NZ licence: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EC-01-08 Hand washing detergents• EC-22-08 General purpose cleaners• EC-02-08 Laundry detergents• EC-03-08 Machine dishwashing detergents• EC-35-08 Commercial and institutional dishwasher detergents• EC-36-08 Floor care products• EC-37-08 Commercial and institutional cleaners• EC-38-08 Commercial and institutional laundry detergents or other third-party audited life cycle ecolabel, or can show that they meet similar criteria. eg, Green Seal (USA), Good Environmental Choice (Australia), Nordic Swan, EU Flower, Blue Angel (Europe) or EcoMark (Japan).
Reduce toxins	Meeting the ecolabel criteria (above) will help to reduce levels of hazardous chemicals.

	<p>Where specialised cleaning products are unavailable in the above ecolabel ranges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prefer cleaners that are readily biodegradable • prefer cleaners low in, or that do not contain, sodium or phosphorous • prefer products made with natural ingredients such as citrus, tree and vegetable oils • avoid products containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • alkylphenol ethoxylates (APEs) • corrosive or strongly irritating substances • volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). <p>Neutral pH, non-irritating products are suitable for most cleaning applications.</p>
Protect ecosystems and human health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow product mixing instructions and use the correct dose for maximum efficiency and minimum environmental impact. • Ensure correct storage and disposal to avoid leaks to waterways and drains. • Only use products that are specific to the building. • Do an assessment of room use and only clean to the level required. • Choose products with minimal hazardous ingredients. • Always wear protective gloves when handling cleaning products. To avoid inhaling toxic fumes and skin irritation, wear goggles and mask when handling stronger chemicals.
Reduce waste to landfill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer concentrated supplies and refills to reduce packaging waste. • Choose products that are supplied in recyclable packaging and are recyclable. • Recycle waste plastics and packaging.

For further information, look at the following resources.

- [Greening Cleaning Services](#) provides considerations and possible contract clause wording for cleaning contracts
- [Responsible Purchasing Guide - Cleaners](#) (US) Last updated: 1 July 2009

Fairtrade products

The following information has been taken from the Ministry for the Environment website at <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/sustainable-industry/govt3/topic-areas/office-consumables/fairtrade.html> Please check this site for further advice.

The provision of refreshment supplies for tea rooms, canteens and boardroom is necessary in all workplaces.

A quick and easy way to improve the sustainability of your office is to provide [Fairtrade](#) certified products as an alternative to the standard tea and coffee supplies.

By choosing Fairtrade your workplace will be directly supporting producers in less developed countries and contributing to sustainable development.

Fairtrade offers many social and economic benefits to producers. They receive a fair and stable price that reflects the cost of sustainable production and labour. Emphasis is put on healthy working conditions and the development of community projects whilst encouraging environmentally sound production methods.

Further information about the benefits of agencies supporting Fairtrade is available at [Buyfair](#) with links to the [EFTA Legal report \(PDF 1.7MB\)](#) and [EU council resolution \(PDF 126KB\)](#) regarding public sector procurement of Fairtrade products in Europe.

References for information contained in this guide

Ministry for the Environment – www.mfe.govt.nz

- <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/sustainable-industry/govt3/topic-areas/office-consumables/paper-products.html> A simple guide to the procurement of paper products covering office, commercial printing and hygiene paper.
- <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/issues/sustainable-industry/govt3/topic-areas/office-consumables/index.html> gives a link to office consumables advice from the Ministry for the Environment under their Govt3 scheme.

References to other useful sources of information

New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development (NZBCSD) – www.nzbcscd.org.nz

<http://www.nzbcscd.org.nz/paper/content.asp?id=407> A detailed guide for the procurement of paper – including information on certified forests, recommendations and facts about paper. Please note that the website contains an 'Update Pages' section for updates to the information contained within the guide.

Contact details of office paper suppliers

Canon	Nelson	0800 222 666	www.canon.co.nz
Corporate Consumables	Tahunanui	03 547 1578	www.corpcons.co.nz
Corporate Express			www.cenz.co.nz
Fuji Xerox	Nelson	03 546 9193	www.fujixerox.co.nz
Office Max	Nelson	03 548 3616	www.officemax.co.nz
Office Products Depot	Richmond	03 544 6116	www.opd.co.nz
Warehouse Stationery	Nelson	03 545 6073	www.warehousestationary.co.nz

For further information contact:

Waste Education Services
Tel: 03 545 9176
Email: info@wes.org.nz
Website: www.wes.org.nz

Waste Education Services (WES) is a free programme for schools and businesses funded by Tasman District (TDC) and Nelson City (NCC) councils.

WES offers information and education to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill. TDC and NCC provide this service through a contract with the Nelson Environment Centre. A team of waste educators are working with schools and businesses in Tasman and Nelson to set up or provide advice on systems to Reduce, Re-use and Recycle their waste.