

Ethical Purchasing Checklist

BUILDINGS

Instructions:

- Use this checklist to review planned purchases or new suppliers of goods and services.
- Choose the product or supplier that best balances social, environmental and financial responsibility.
- Refer difficult decisions on major expenditures to the board for policy decisions.
- Research and maintain a list of ethical producers and suppliers and use their products and services.

Voluntary Simplicity	No	Yes	
1. Do we really need this product?			
2. Is there a Recycled alternative available			
<i>Rate from 1 to 5 (5 = excellent)</i>			
Materials Sustainability and Processing - Beginning of Product Life	Product A	Product B	Product C
3. Is the material used in this product rapidly renewable? (i.e., replaced in less than 10 years)			
4. Is the material used in this product a limited resource? (old growth forests and plastics, petroleum based products, are limited resources)			
5. Is the material used in this product sustainably harvested?			
6. Was it produced using sustainable farming practices?			
7. Was the management of the forest that produced the material certified by the Forest Stewardship Council Cert or CSA?			
8. Is the material used in this product recycled from previous post-consumer use?			
9. Is the material used in this product recycled from previous pre-consumer use? (Material that is recycled from pre-consumer sources is usually scrap material from manufacturing. Being able to sell scrap material for recycling may discourage manufacturers from developing manufacturing processes that use the original materials efficiently.)			
10. Is the product salvaged from a previous use?			
11. How much “embodied energy” is in this material? That is, how much energy was needed to process and transport the material? (Huge amounts of energy are used in making cement from limestone.)			
12. Did the processing of the material used in this product create dangerous pollutants? (some paper and textiles are bleached with chlorine resulting in dioxins being released into the environment. Other manufacturing processes create other pollutants.)			
Materials Sustainability and Processing - End of Product Life			
13. How will the product be disposed of at the end of its service? Will the product’s disposal create dangerous pollutants? (flooring made of petrochemicals)			
14. Are the materials used in the product biodegradable?			
15. Are the materials used in the product recyclable?			
Healthy Indoor Living Environment			
16. Does the product contain added urea formaldehyde resin? (Wood and agrifiber products contain small amounts of natural urea formaldehydes, but additional urea formaldehydes are often added during processing these products.)			
17. Does the product emit volatile organic compounds (VOCs)? (Adhesives, sealants, paints and carpets with low VOC emissions comply with Green Seal standards)			



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Local Materials	Product A	Product B	Product C
18. How far away was the material in this product harvested?			
20. How far away was the material processed?			
21. How was the material or product shipped? (<i>Shipping by rail or ship takes less energy and emits less pollutants per mile than shipping by truck</i>)			
Packaging			
22. Does the product come with more packaging than necessary?			
23. Is the packaging recyclable? (<i>made of paper or cardboard</i>)			
Working Conditions			
24. Did the workers who produced the product have safe working conditions?			
25. Did the workers who produced the product have fair working conditions?			
26. Were the workers who produced the product of appropriate age?			
27. Were the workers who produced the product paid fair wages?			
28. Was the product tested on animals?			
Total Ratings:			
Decision:			

Resources

The following web pages can help with research on vendors & products:

<http://www.responsible shopper.org/>

<http://www.greenpages.org/>

<http://www.ethicalconsumer.org/magazine/buyers/buyguide.htm>



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CUSTODIAN			
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13. How will the product be disposed of at the end of its service? Will the product’s disposal create dangerous pollutants? (flooring made of petrochemicals)			
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