

**CATHOLIC HEALTHCARE WEST  
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

**FROM:** CHW Mission Integration

**SUBJECT:** Environmentally Preferable Purchasing

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** May 12, 2010

**REVISED:**

**ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE:** May 12, 2010

**REPLACES:**

<b>APPLIES TO:</b>	System Offices:	<u>    X    </u>
	Acute Care Entities:	<u>    X    </u>
	Non-acute Care Entities:	<u>    X    </u>

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to articulate the commitment of Catholic Healthcare West (“CHW”) to purchase products and services that are inherently safer to human and environmental health and that address environmental impacts throughout their lifecycle.

CHW envisions a system where patients, staff and visitors interact in a healing environment that embraces safer building products, clean air, reduced toxins, energy and water efficiency, and safe working practices.

Environmentally responsible purchasing enables CHW to:

- Significantly lessen its impact on the environment.
- Reduce capital and operating costs through avoided waste disposal, pollution abatement, decreased liability and lower potential occupational injury costs.
- Reduce the quantity and toxicity of health care waste.
- Contribute to a healthier environment for patients, workers, and visitors through reduced exposure to hazardous substances.
- Create a culture of quality performance through increased environmental awareness.

### Alignment with CHW Core Values

This policy advances CHW's core values, as follows:

- **Stewardship** – Accountability for the ecological resources entrusted to our care as we promote healing and wholeness
- **Collaboration** – Working with people who support common values and vision to achieve goals and to improve quality of life
- **Excellence** – Specifying products and processes that are sustainable and healthy for patients, employees and planet, with the goal of providing quality care
- **Justice** – Advocating for social and environmental justice, while addressing issues affecting those who are poor and disenfranchised
- **Dignity** – Respecting the inherent value and worth of each member in the broader community and recognizing all individuals need clean air, pure water and healthy food.

## II. POLICY

Catholic Healthcare West seeks to provide health care services in a manner that protects and enhances the health of people, communities and Earth, now and for future generations. To that end, CHW seeks to purchase environmentally preferable products whenever they perform effectively and are available at a reasonably competitive price.

## III. GUIDELINES

CHW prefers products and services that address environmental impacts throughout the lifecycle. These products and services should:

- Use **greener chemicals**, chemicals that are inherently less hazardous and release little to no toxic by-products across their lifecycle.
- Promote the use of **renewable materials** by increasing the use of sustainable, bio-based materials and reducing the use of fossil fuel-based materials.
- Support **healthy food systems** by sourcing food products that are local, seasonal, nutritious, and produced in a way that minimizes degradation to human and environmental health and vitality.
- Promote **land stewardship** by cultivating healthy ecosystems and protecting natural resources.

- Promote **sustainable energy** by using renewable energy sources and reducing energy use.
- Protect **clean air** by minimizing pollutants.
- Contribute to the availability of **clean water** by minimizing water use and pollution, and avoiding bottled water products.
- **Minimize waste** by implementing the three “Rs”: reduce, reuse and recycle.
- Use **environmentally sound waste disposal** technologies where reuse, reduction and recycling cannot be achieved.

#### IV. DEFINITIONS

**Recycling** - The process of collecting, sorting, cleansing, treating, and reconstituting materials that would otherwise become solid waste and returning them to the economic mainstream in the form of raw material for new, reused, or reconstituted products which has meet the quality standard necessary to be reused in the marketplace.

**Waste Prevention** - The action undertaken by CHW to eliminate or reduce the amount or toxicity of materials.

**Recycled Products** - Products manufactured with waste materials that have been recovered or diverted from the waste stream.

**Environmentally Preferred Purchasing (EPP)** - Buying “Green”; the purchase of products and services whose environmental impacts have been considered and found to be less damaging to the environment and human health when compared to competing products and services.

#### V. PROCEDURES

Catholic Healthcare West is committed to applying guidelines and specifications of Environmentally Preferred Purchasing to all major purchasing decisions.

- A. CHW staff involved in product selection will evaluate the environmental impacts of products and services in their effort to select healthy and safe products and services that are also environmentally sound. CHW will work to find alternatives to products containing:
  1. **Persistent bioaccumulative toxic compounds** – Compounds that are toxic, persist in the environment and build up in the food chain, and can pose risks to public health by causing adverse effects to biological systems.

2. **Bisphenol-A** – A plastic chemical used in a variety of capacities that the National Institute of Health National Toxicology Program believes is hazardous to human reproductive and developmental health.
3. **Carcinogens, mutagens and reproductive toxic chemicals** – Chemicals that have been shown to cause cancer, a mutation of the genes, or damage to the development or function of reproductive systems.
4. **Halogenated flame retardants** – These flame retardants have been shown through controlled studies in laboratory animals to disrupt thyroid function, critical for brain development early in life, and potentially suppress immune systems, cause cancer, and disrupt normal endocrine function.
5. **Chlorine-containing flame retardants** – These flame retardants are suspected to accumulate in the liver and kidneys and be carcinogens and reproductive toxicants.
6. **Latex** – Extensive use of this material can cause allergic reactions in healthcare personnel and patients.
7. **Mercury** – A metal that is a potent neurotoxin that can affect the brain, spinal cord, kidneys, and liver.
8. **Phthalates (e.g. plasticizer DEHP (di-2-ethylhexyl phthalate)** - A family of industrial chemicals that are used as softeners in polyvinyl chloride plastic and as solvents in consumer products.
9. **Polyvinyl chloride (PVC)** – The manufacture and disposal of this material releases dioxin, a known carcinogen, into the environment.
10. **Volatile organic compounds and semi-volatile organic compounds** – These are “any compound of carbon, excluding carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, carbonic acid, metallic carbides or carbonates, and ammonium carbonate, which participates in atmospheric photochemical reactions,” (with a few exclusions) U.S. EPA

CHW prefers:

1. Building products, materials and furnishings that do not adversely impact indoor air quality
2. Products with high post-consumer recycled content
3. Products that are readily recycled, reprocessed, and/or reused
4. Products that are latex-free
5. Products that do not contain or contain a reduced amount of toxins
6. Products that have “Take Back” provisions
7. Paper products that are chlorine-free
8. Products in minimal packaging that is recyclable, non toxic or bio-based

9. Products that use less energy and water during normal use
  10. Products that use less water and energy during manufacturing
- B. CHW staff involved with product selection will communicate to the manufacturers, distributors and vendors that CHW expects suppliers to continuously develop price competitive products that conform to our EPP guidelines and specifications as defined in this policy.
- C. CHW Supply Chain will review this policy annually and revise as appropriate.