

Environmental Purchasing Checklist

Waste management services

This checklist suggests environmental criteria for use by Australian Government departments and agencies when procuring waste management services. These environmental criteria would generally be considered together with price, quality and other purchasing criteria in accordance with the [Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines and Best Practice Guidance](#). The checklist also provides tips for purchasers and users, testimonials and links to further information. Purchasers may choose to amend the criteria and specifications to meet their own requirements.

WHAT ARE THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES?

Poorly managed waste produces litter, fills up our landfills, can cause pollution, harm wildlife and wastes resources. It is possible to recycle or reuse much of the waste that Australian Government departments and agencies send to landfill, and this can often result in cost savings. Organic wastes (including food scraps) in landfill are a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions.

KEY AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT POLICIES

The [Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines and Best Practice Guidance](#) state that the core principle governing Australian Government procurement is value for money, a concept evaluated on a whole of life basis for the goods or services being procured. Officials buying goods and services need to be satisfied that the best possible outcome has been achieved taking into account all relevant costs and benefits over the whole of the procurement cycle.

According to the [Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines and Best Practice Guidance](#), “officials should be aware of any relevant environmental legislation and targets set by the Commonwealth, and ensure they take into account matters affecting the environment ... when formulating requirements. They should include relevant environmental criteria in specifications and requests for tender.”

The Commonwealth, State and Territory governments endorsed the [National Government Waste Reduction and Purchasing Guidelines](#) at the November 1996 meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZECC). Members agreed to a range of actions, including establishing purchasing policies to reduce waste.

SUGGESTED ENVIRONMENTAL PURCHASING CRITERIA FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Give consideration to service providers ...	Comments
... that are committed to delivering high-level support to waste minimisation and recycling systems.	High level support should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provision of well-labelled and colour-coded bins.• Provision of educational material for site staff.• Additional measures to reduce, reuse and recycle waste –

Give consideration to service providers ...	Comments
	<p>require contract bidders to specify what measures they will take.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and reporting of waste loads and the success of waste minimisation programs. <p>Look for companies that can demonstrate a track record of success in this area.</p>
... that are committed to recycling the most waste materials.	<p>For example, favour companies that will recycle all types of paper over those which recycle only office paper. The 'tips for users' section below lists common recyclables from offices and similar premises, together with circumstances in which they can usually be recycled.</p>
... that are committed to responsible disposal of non-recyclable waste streams.	<p>Appropriate commitments might include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry codes of best practice will be adhered to. Waste will only be disposed of in a landfill fitted with a landfill gas collection system to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (where applicable). Any hazardous waste will be separately managed using appropriate vehicles and a waste tracking system. An audited system will be established for reporting disposal arrangements, including landfill receipts. <p>Look for companies that can demonstrate a track record of success in this area.</p>
... from companies that document additional environmental benefits of their services or superior environmental performance of their companies.	<p>Documentation should preferably include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A certified Quality Management System or Environmental Management System (If no companies tendering are certified, the department could specify a date by which certification would need to be obtained). A demonstrated track record. Membership of industry associations. <p>Companies may make other valid environmental claims to differentiate themselves from their competitors.</p>

TIPS FOR PURCHASERS

Waste contractors are expected to collect and appropriately dispose of waste but are generally paid on the evidence of collection only. There have been examples of waste management companies cutting costs by inappropriate disposal, often at cost to the environment. If a government waste contractor disposes of waste inappropriately and it is shown that the contractor's capacity and intention to manage the waste correctly was not properly checked, some liability may lie with the commissioning department or agency. Appropriate documentation and auditing is therefore important.

Recycling usually requires separate handling of waste streams and often multiple waste contractors. Your tender may need to allow for tenderers to bid for separate components of the overall waste management project. You should contract to require service providers to inform you of any significant contamination in materials separated for recycling. Service

providers should also advise about their willingness to expand the range of materials recycled during the run of the contract.

Asset management companies associated with auction houses offer disposal services for computers and other office equipment. These repair, reuse or recycle equipment to best financial return and will often provide a good environmental outcome by avoiding landfill.

You should expect your contractor(s) to provide cost effective recycling in at least the following circumstances (in other situations, such as small offices or locations outside major towns, check with your local Council to see if they provide recycling services):

Waste streams	Should be recyclable at ...
<i>Office paper, newsprint, cardboard</i>	<i>All premises in major and many smaller towns</i>
<i>Containers – glass, aluminium, steel & plastic (codes 1, 2 & 3)</i>	<i>Medium-sized and large premises in major towns</i>
<i>Liquid paperboard (milk cartons)</i>	<i>Medium-sized and large premises in major towns</i>
<i>Food waste / Organic waste</i>	<i>Premises containing cafeterias or similar with opportunities for on-site composting or worm farming. Food waste collection may also be available in major towns.</i>
<i>Spent fluorescent tubes</i>	<i>Large premises in major towns</i>
<i>Office equipment consumables (toner & inkjet cartridges, floppy disks, others...)</i>	<i>All premises in major and many smaller towns. See also Office equipment consumables checklist.</i>

TIPS FOR USERS

Establishment and maintenance of effective waste minimisation and recycling systems requires the cooperation of waste contractors, cleaning contractors, facilities managers and site staff. Ideally, a program should be developed including:

- commitment by senior management;
- a policy and strategy;
- appropriate organisational structures;
- adequate resources; and
- monitoring and reporting systems.

For detailed information, see the 1998 *Review of Waste Reduction and Purchasing in Commonwealth Agencies* at

<http://www.ea.gov.au/industry/sustainable/greening-govt/index.html>

SUCCESS STORIES

The Department of the Environment and Heritage has an extensive waste management program that includes the separation of organic waste, recyclables and non-recyclable materials. The Department has been actively recycling since 1996, and last year consigned 16 tonnes of organic material for composting. This amounted to approximately 17 tonnes of CO₂ abatement.

As part of its office waste strategy, Sydney Water measured the amount of office waste generated at its Head Office building. It was determined that while it costs approximately 21c per kg to send general mixed waste to landfill, materials like paper, glass and aluminium can be recycled at a cost of only 2c per kg, or less. Not only does recycling deliver environmental and social benefits, it is 10 times less expensive than disposal to landfill.

An aggressive waste reduction program implemented by the Campbelltown Institute of TAFE has resulted in an 86% reduction in the total amount of waste being sent to landfill. Before the program approximately 14 skips of waste were being generated per week; this has now dropped to 2 per week. Most notable are the efforts of the Tourism and Hospitality section that, with assistance from the Macarthur Waste Board, has built worm farms to handle food waste generated by cooking courses. What the worms can't handle is sent to special composting bays. Garden waste is added to the food waste and the resulting high quality waste is used in landscaping and on the Institute's gardens.

Further success stories can be found at the [Greening of Government website](#).

LINKS TO FURTHER INFORMATION

The **Greening of Government** website provides the policy framework for Greening of Government, as well as a range of Green Procurement Tools and other useful information.

<http://www.ea.gov.au/industry/sustainable/greening-govt/index.html>

WastePro is an environmental and business advisory service for waste generators, local councils, government departments, consultants, waste operators and statutory authorities. It aims to provide assistance, guidance, training and advice to producers of all forms of waste, thus enabling producers to meet the objectives of sustainable waste management set by all Governments.

<http://www.vrta.com.au/wastepro/wastepro.htm>

The **Waste Management Association of Australia** is an association for waste management professionals, with a wide membership including companies, individuals, government organisations, academics and consultants working in the waste management area. Members agree to abide by a code of conduct. <http://www.wmaa.asn.au/>.

Facilities Management Association – The FMA represents facilities managers and provides a range of support mechanisms.

<http://www.fma.com.au/main.htm>

Guide to recycling services in Victoria – this is available at:

http://www.ecorecycle.vic.gov.au/frames_commerce.asp

Guide to recycling services in NSW – this is available at:

<http://www.wasteboards.nsw.gov.au/directory/default.htm>

Environmental Specification

Waste management services

Purchasers should request information from potential suppliers at the time of requesting a quotation. This environmental specification is intended to provide assistance in obtaining environmental data from suppliers. The information that would be requested from suppliers is shown in the Information required column. Items in this specification are based on the criteria in the Environmental Purchasing Checklist for waste management services.

Consideration will be given to service providers ...	Information required from companies	Weighting
... that are committed to delivering high-level support to waste minimisation and recycling systems.	Describe the types of services that will be provided to promote waste minimisation and recycling. This could include specification of bin types, educational material and monitoring and reporting systems. Document experience in implementing similar commitments elsewhere.	25-35%
... that are committed to recycling the most waste materials.	Specify which materials you will recycle.	25-35%
... that are committed to responsible disposal of non-recyclable waste streams.	Provide commitments to responsible disposal of non-recyclable waste streams. For example, you might commit to one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry codes of best practice will be adhered to. • Waste will only be disposed of in a landfill fitted with a landfill gas collection system to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. • Any hazardous waste will be separately managed using appropriate vehicles and a waste tracking system. • An audited system will be established for reporting disposal arrangements, including landfill receipts. Document experience in implementing similar commitments elsewhere.	25-35%
... that document additional environmental benefits of their services or superior environmental performance of their companies.	Provide appropriate documentation to support any environmental claims made. This should include, where possible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A certified Quality Management System or Environmental Management System (If no companies tendering are certified, the department could specify a date by which certification would need to be obtained). • A demonstrated track record. • Membership of industry associations. 	5-15%