



## Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy

### Policy Statement

In support of Kaiser Permanente's (KP) mission to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve, the procurement and supply staff within KP are committed to applying guidelines and specifications of Environmentally Preferred Purchasing to all major, strategic, and critical purchasing decisions. KP's Sourcing Core Groups, supported by purchasing and environmental stewardship staff, will evaluate the environmental impacts (e.g., waste, toxicity) of products and services in their effort to select healthy and safe products and services that are also environmentally sound. KP personnel involved with product selection are required to communicate to the marketplace that KP expects suppliers to continuously develop price competitive products that conform to our EPP guidelines and specifications as defined in this policy.

### Guidelines

KP 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.

### Specific Environmental Considerations for Purchasing

KP takes a precautionary approach to selecting products and services. We acknowledge that federal and state regulations and standards do not always address critical issues concerning public and environmental health. We are mindful of environmental and public health concerns brought to the forefront through independent and rigorous research. Therefore, KP is working to:

#### Avoid products containing the following chemicals and materials

- **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.
- **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.
- **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.

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This policy will be updated as priority chemicals and concerns emerge.

- **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.
- **Chlorine-containing flame retardants** – These flame retardants are suspected to accumulate in the liver and kidneys and be carcinogens and reproductive toxicants.
- **Latex** – Extensive use of this material can cause allergic reactions in healthcare personnel and patients.
- **Mercury** – A metal that is a potent neurotoxin that can affect the brain, spinal cord, kidneys, and liver.
- **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.
- **Polyvinyl chloride (PVC)** – The manufacture and disposal of this material releases dioxin, a known carcinogen, into the environment.
- **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

### Implications for Manufacturers and Suppliers

The EPP policy is also meant to convey to manufacturers and suppliers the importance that Kaiser Permanente places on reducing our life-cycle ecological footprint while continuing to improve overall public health. We count on our suppliers to heed this policy and see it as encouragement to innovate to meet and exceed our expectations. We also expect our suppliers to complete our supplier disclosure process by providing KP with honest and complete information on corporate social responsibility and product performance as it pertains to environmental and public health.

#### Specific considerations should be to:

- Design products to contain high post-consumer recycled content
- Design products to be readily recycled, reprocessed, reused, and/or composted
- Manufacture products using minimal energy and water, and develop products that require minimal resource during normal operation.
- Manufacture products to reduce total cost of ownership and improve end of life responsibility by using “take-back” provisions.
- Manufacture products without chemicals and materials listed above and in accordance with national and international chemical and material standards.
- Transport and package units in minimal packaging that is recyclable, non toxic and bio-based.
- Improve transport and production methods to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

## Appendix

### Definitions

**DEHP** (di-2-ethylhexyl phthalate) is a plasticizer (softener) used to increase the flexibility of polymers like polyvinyl chloride (PVC). DEHP is the plasticizer for most PVC medical devices such as IV bags and tubing. DEHP can leach out of the flexible PVC medical devices into the solution or medication it contains and subsequently into the patient. Animal studies indicate that DEHP is a potentially reproductive and development toxicant.

**Environmentally Preferred Purchasing** is 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.

**Life-cycle** A product’s life-cycle refers to the environmental and public health implications of all phases of a product’s existence; from raw material extraction or production, to manufacture, distribution, use, and disposal and includes all intervening transportation.

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**Sourcing Core Groups** teams of Kaiser Permanente physicians and employees facilitated by purchasing and supply personnel who ensure that clinical and business requirements, such as environmental criteria, become part of the request for proposal (RFP) process. Each team is responsible for setting weighted criteria and through a team vote deciding which supplier/products are recommended for contracting.

**Take Back Provisions** encompass the ability to return items for credit, reuse and disposal such as the return of mercury sphygmomanometers, fluorescent lights, shipping containers and packaging etc.

### **Responsibilities**

This policy is maintained by Kaiser Permanente's Chief Procurement Officer and the Environmental Supply Chain Manager.

### **Maintenance**

This policy shall be reviewed annually to assure continuing relevance and revised as necessary.

### **References**

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). [1986]. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter I, Subchapter I, Pts. 260-281). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/general/risk/risk-1.pdf>
- Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations: *Environment of Care Standard Hazardous Materials and Wastes*. Oakbrook Terrace, IL: Joint Commission.
- Green Guide for Healthcare (GGHC) [www.gghc.org](http://www.gghc.org)
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). [1996]. Hazard Communication (Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations, Pt. 1910, Section 1200). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- California Department of Health Services, Indoor Air Quality Division, *Standard Practice for the Testing of Volatile Organic Emissions from Various Sources Using Small Scale Environmental Chambers*, CA/DHS/EHLB/R-174. The current version of this list is accessible at <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/deodc/ehlb/iaq/VOCS/Practice.htm>
- Cal/EPA, *ARB list of Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs)*. The current version of this list is accessible at <http://www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/taclist.htm>
- Cal/EPA OEHHA *Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 (Proposition 65)*. The current versions of these lists are accessible at [http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65\\_list/newlist.html](http://www.oehha.ca.gov/prop65/prop65_list/newlist.html)
- Cal/EPA OEHHA *list of chemicals with noncancer chronic Reference Exposure Levels (RELs)*. The current version of this list is accessible at [http://www.oehha.ca.gov/air/chronic\\_rels/AllChrels.html](http://www.oehha.ca.gov/air/chronic_rels/AllChrels.html)
- Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS) Reference Specifications for Energy and Resource Efficiency, *Section 01350 Special Environmental Requirements*. The current version of this Specification is accessible at <http://www.eley.com/specs/index.htm> and [http://www.chps.net/manual/documents/Sec\\_01350.doc](http://www.chps.net/manual/documents/Sec_01350.doc)
- Federal Trade Commission (FTC) *Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims* <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/qnrule/guides980427.htm>
- Health Care Without Harm <http://www.hcwh.org/us>
- ISO 9001-2000 *Quality Management Systems – Requirements* <http://www.iso.org/iso/en/ISOOnline.frontpage>

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- ISO 14020 – *Environmental Labels and Declarations – General Principles*  
<http://www.iso.org/iso/en/ISOOnline.frontpage>
- ISO 14021 – *Environmental Labels and Declarations – Self-declared Environmental Claims*  
(Type II Environmental Labeling <http://www.iso.org/iso/en/ISOOnline.frontpage>)
- ISO 14024 – *Environmental Labels and Declarations – Type I Environmental Labeling – Principles and Procedures* <http://www.iso.org/iso/en/ISOOnline.frontpage>
- South Coast Air Quality Management District *Rule 1113 – Architectural Coatings*  
<http://www.aqmd.gov/rules/Rules/r1113.html>
- South Coast Air Quality Management District *Rule 1168 – Adhesive and Sealant Applications*  
<http://www.aqmd.gov/rules/html/r1168.html>
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency <http://www.epa.gov>