



Buying GREEN

NAVY AWASH IN GREEN PROCUREMENT

The Navy's efforts to identify and procure environmentally-friendly products and services have found it awash in green procurement and well on its way to achieving Department of Defense (DoD) green procurement goals.

Green Procurement (GP) is a 'need to know' topic for all Navy personnel who request or purchase a wide array of products and services. While many aspects of green procurement have been in place for several years, initiatives have had different names, including Affirmative Procurement and Environmentally Preferable Products, resulting in some confusion. For the DoD agencies, DoD's Green Procurement Strategy brought disparate pieces together into one program. (See our accompanying article entitled, "The Essence of DoD's Green Procurement Strategy: Promoting Environmental Stewardship Through Green Procurement.")

This article summarizes GP concepts, seeks to clarify terminology associated with the different initiatives, highlights some of the program's requirements, provides sources for information and training, and notes specific Navy efforts to meet the requirements. The accompanying article entitled, "Greening the Logistics Pipeline: DLA Releases New Tools for Green Procurement"

provides additional details on support for meeting GP program requirements.

Green Procurement—A Summary

GP is intended to increase government purchases of products or services that have a reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose. GP was also designed to create a market for environmentally conscious products. Several established federal GP preference programs require procurement of environmentally preferable products and services. Such established programs include:

- the Recycled Content/Affirmative Procurement (AP) program,
- the Energy Star Program and energy and water efficiency programs,
- Alternative fuels and alternative fuel vehicles programs,
- Biobased products,
- Non-ozone depleting products, and
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) priority chemicals reduction.

In addition, the Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) program, another component of green procurement, encourages agencies to look at multiple factors in selecting products and services and to select the one that has the least negative effect on the environment. In other words, to look holistically at a product or service lifecycle and consider all the environmental costs.

Thus, GP provides the overarching program within which the various procurement preference programs fall. GP is not specifically an environmental program; it is a procurement program with environmental concerns.

The Guiding Principles of ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE PURCHASING

EPA's EPP web site (www.epa.gov/oppt/epp/index.htm) identifies five guiding principles for selecting an environmentally preferable product:

1. Include environmental considerations as part of the normal purchasing process,
2. Emphasize pollution prevention early in the purchasing process,
3. Examine multiple environmental attributes throughout the life-cycle of a particular product or service,
4. Compare relevant environmental impacts when selecting products and services, and
5. Collect and base purchasing decisions on accurate and meaningful information about environmental performance.

THE NAVY SUPPORTS DoD's GREEN PROCUREMENT PROGRAM GOAL OF 100 PERCENT COMPLIANCE WITH MANDATORY FEDERAL GREEN PROCUREMENT PROGRAMS IN ALL ACQUISITION TRANSACTIONS.

The Joint Service Pollution Prevention Technical Library provides links to several documents, including "Integrating Green Purchasing into your Environmental Management System" which can be found at <http://p2library.nfesc.navy.mil/topics/green.html>.

The Defense Logistics Agency Training Center (DTC) will be offering a workshop, Buying Green: A Multifunctional Approach to Pollution Prevention. (See our sidebar entitled, "Buying Green: A Multifunctional Approach to Pollution Prevention.")

Where is the Navy Going with Green Procurement?

The Navy supports DoD's GP program goal of 100 percent compliance with mandatory federal GP programs in all acquisition transactions. The Affirmative Procurement document (NAVSUP P-728) continues to apply. In addition, the update to the OPNAV Instruction 5090.1B: Navy Environmental and Natural Resources Program Manual will include additional information on green procurement. The next step is to create a Department of the Navy GP Plan (or adopt the DoD GP Strategy), which will include the AP guide as well as the other GP programs.

In practice, the Navy already is at work on several of the GP program categories.


The Navy has actively pursued alternative fuels and alternative fuel vehicles. The Navy's January 2005 biodiesel policy provided additional support to these efforts. The policy required all non-exempt diesel vehicles to begin using biodiesel (B-20) fuel by 1 June 2005, where such fuel is available and permissible by federal, State and/or local rules.

In addition to biodiesel, the Navy is using natural gas, ethanol, and propane in modern internal combustion vehicles on domestic installations. The Navy is also addressing the alternative fuel infrastructure needed to support other alternative fuel vehicles. An on-site biodiesel production demonstration is underway at Naval Base Ventura County in Port Hueneme, CA. It is processing used cooking oils from on-base sources such as the base galley and commercial fast food franchises. A natural gas to hydrogen reforming station was slated for installation at U.S. Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.

Biobased products include wheat and corn based blasting media, to replace plastic media for removing paint from metal surfaces. (See our article entitled,



"Navy Evaluates Cornstarch As An Alternative Blast Media: Results From First Demonstration Are Encouraging," in the winter 2005 issue of Currents. Browse the entire Currents archive on the Naval Air Systems Command's environmental web site at www.enviro-navair.navy.mil.)

These are just a few examples that prove that the Navy is awash in green procurement. 

NOTE: Tanya Courtney, the former GP program manager with the Chief of Naval Operations, Environmental Readiness Division, made significant contributions to this article.

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