

EP³ Glossary of Terms

To provide guidance to City staff in evaluating the purchase of Environmentally Preferable products and non-professional services for City use, the following definitions shall apply:

DEFINITIONS

- A. “ALTERNATIVE ENERGY” refers to other forms of energy that are capable of doing the same work as traditional forms of energy. Example: solar power, wind generators.
- B. “BIO-BASED” refers to commercial or industrial products (other than food or feed) that utilize biological products or renewable domestic agricultural (plant, animal, and marine) or forestry materials. Example: integration of plant/animal-based fertilizers into an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) landscape maintenance contract.
- C. “BIODEGRADABLE” refers to materials or products which are capable of being decomposed by natural biological processes. Example: biodegradable detergent.
- D. “COMPOSTABLE” refers to products that are comprised of cellulose-containing materials that can be broken down into compost when subjected to biological degradation. Example: compostable tableware and flatware, brush, leaves, tree trimmings.
- E. “ENERGY EFFICIENT” refers to using less energy/electricity to perform the same function. Example: low wattage light bulbs, low-energy dryers. Refer to the US EPA’s Energy Star ratings for energy efficient products (www.energystar.gov).
- F. “ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE PRODUCTS” refers to products that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products that serve the same purpose. These products minimize the consumption of resources, energy, and water; prevent the creation of solid waste, air pollution or water pollution; minimize the use of materials or processes which compromise the environment; and/or promote the use of non-toxic substances and avoid toxic materials or processes.
- G. “LIFE CYCLE COSTS” refers to the cost of a product over its entire lifetime.
- H. “LOW TOXICITY” refers to a decrease in the amount of toxic chemicals used in making a product. Example: water-based paint instead of lead paint, alcohol-based thermometer instead of mercury-based thermometer.

- I. “LOW VOLATILE ORGANIC COMPOUNDS” (VOC) refers to products with a low amount of volatile organic compounds. Example: paint, aerosol sprays, solvents.
- J. “POLLUTION REDUCTION” refers to conserving finite natural resources and preventing waste and harmful substances from contaminating the environment. Example: low emission systems, minimum fuel consumption.
- K. “RECYCLABLE” refers to a product which, after its intended use, can demonstrably be diverted from the solid waste stream for use as a raw material in the manufacture of another product. Example: aluminum cans, bottles, newspapers, etc.
- L. “RECYCLED CONTENT” refers to a percentage of post-consumer recycled materials, defined as products generated by businesses or consumers which have served their intended end uses, and which have been separated or diverted from the solid waste stream for the purposes of collection, recycling, and disposition. Guidelines contained in the U.S. EPA’s Recovered Materials Advisory Notices (see www.epa.gov/cpg/) should be used when ordering recycled content products. Example: paper and non-paper products, retread tires.
- M. “REPAIRABLE” refers to products that can be rebuilt or repaired and used again. Example: “take back” programs where the vendor will take back and repair, refurbish or recycle tools.
- N. “REUSABLE” refers to products that are used more than once, replacing single-use products. Example: reusable oil filter, refillable toner cartridge, refillable pens and pencils, reusable packaging.
- O. “WASTE REDUCTION” refers to the efficient use of all resources, so as to reduce the amount of waste. Example: minimal product packaging.
- P. “WATER CONSERVING” refers to products that use water efficiently (sparingly and only when necessary) and reduces water waste. Example: low-flow showerheads and toilets.