



ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIFICATION GUIDANCE FOR AUTOMOTIVE PRODUCTS

The District of Columbia is committed to procuring quality goods and services in a timely manner and reasonable cost that support the District in meeting its sustainability goals. Compliance with specification guidance is sufficient to meet PPRA Section 1101(a) environmentally preferable procurement requirements. To access solicitation documents with full contract language, click [here](#).



BENEFITS

Retread tires require **70% less oil** to produce than new tires and save space in landfills.

Retread tires sell for **30-50% less** than comparable new tires.

King County, WA **saved \$17,000** in 2010 by switching to recycled antifreeze.

SOURCES

epa.gov/epawaste/conservation/materials/tires/markets.htm#reuse
retread.org/#!/about-retreading/c1srm
fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/publications/1107025.pdf

Scope

This specification addresses automotive products for cars and light-duty trucks, including tires, rims, lubricating oil, hydraulic fluids, gear oils, and engine coolants.

Specification Language

Automotive products purchased by the District of Columbia shall meet the environmental criteria defined below.

Product	Environmental Criteria
Tires	Retread
Rims	Refurbished
Lubricating oil: engine lubricating oils, hydraulic fluids, gear oils	25% or higher re-refined oil base stock (by weight)
Engine coolants (antifreeze)	50% or higher recycled content (by weight)

Reporting

At the frequency specified in the solicitation, the Contractor shall submit to the Contracting Officer an EPPS Report, indicating that the products supplied to the District comply with the District's EPPS criteria. The following information shall be included in the report:

- a. Contractor
- b. Contract award date
- c. Contract No.
- d. PO#
- e. Product description
- f. Sku
- g. Number of units sold
- h. Price per unit



Specification Language (continued)

- i. Total cost
- j. Compliance with DC environmental criteria – Indicate whether each item purchased is compliant with DC environmental requirements. If the environmental requirement was not specified in the solicitation, indicate NA.

An EPPS Report template is available to assist Contractors in meeting the District's EPPS reporting requirements on the [Sustainable Purchasing Program web page](#).

Background Information

Automotive products reflect a large and diverse group of items; therefore, this specification focuses on automotive products for which sustainable and reliable alternatives are widely available. This specification follows the [U.S. EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines](#), which serve as the model for specifications in many other jurisdictions around the country.

Retread tires offer significant environmental benefits and cost savings. Retreading involves removing the tread (outside) of the tire and adding a new tread; this is a sustainable alternative to discarding old tires in landfills and purchasing new tires. Passenger and light pick-up tires are retreaded according to standards established by the U.S. Department of Transportation. Studies, such as a [2009 study by the Washington State Department of Transportation](#), have found that retread tires are as safe as comparable new tires. A number of jurisdictions around the country specify retread tires, including: California, Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Washington State. Retread tires are also specified in the Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines.

Refurbished rims offer benefits similar to retread tires. Purchasing refurbished instead of new rims reduces the use of virgin materials and means that fewer discarded rims are disposed in landfills. Refurbished rims may also cost significantly less than comparable new rims. The District of Columbia is already purchasing refurbished rims from a variety of vendors.

Re-refined lubricating oil conserves oil, a finite resource, and reduces pollution caused by the improper disposal of used oil. The recycling of used oil has evolved, and today, re-refined lubricating oil is subject to the same performance standards as virgin oil. According to EPA, extensive laboratory testing and field studies have found that re-refined oil is equivalent to virgin oil and can even outperform virgin oil. Several major automobile manufacturers have indicated that using re-refined oils will not void warranties. EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines recommend that agencies specify 25% re-refined oil or higher. Higher standards are available; for example, the State of California specifies 70% re-refined oil.

Recycled engine coolant (antifreeze) reduces the risk of soil contamination and water pollution resulting from improper disposal of coolant, and may be less expensive than new coolant. According to EPA, recycled antifreeze meets the same nationally recognized performance specifications as new coolant, and might even be purer than virgin coolant. EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines recommend that agencies purchase reclaimed engine coolant and request this item when having their vehicles serviced. The EPA Guidelines do not specify a minimum percentage of recycled content for antifreeze. Jurisdictions including California, Washington State, and Mecklenburg County (North Carolina) specify varying percentages; for example, King County (Washington) recommends at least 50% recycled content, and California requires at least 70% recycled content.



Environmental Hotspots The most important environmental benefits associated with this specification

MATERIALS USE / SUSTAINABLE SOURCING	Recycled tires, rims, lubricating oil, and engine coolant conserve virgin resources required to making new products. For example, EPA <u>reports</u> that every year, retreading saves more than 400 million gallons of oil in North America. The State of Massachusetts <u>reports</u> that it takes just one gallon of used oil, compared with 42 gallons of crude oil, to produce 2.5 quarts of lubricating oil.
ENERGY CONSUMPTION	Transport, processing, and manufacture of recycled products require less total energy than producing and transporting virgin products. According to statistics cited in an <u>MIT study</u> , tire retreading can reduce production energy demands for tires by up to 66%.
RECYCLED CONTENT	This specification requires a range of recycled content for different automotive products, which reduces the demand for raw materials.
TOXICITY/HEAVY METALS	Antifreeze and lubricating oil contain several toxic chemicals including those that are suspected to cause cancer. Recycling rather than disposing of these products can limit exposure to toxics caused by improper disposal of used products.
END-OF-LIFE DISPOSAL	Buying recycled lubricating oil and antifreeze prevents these products from being improperly disposed (e.g., poured down the drain), where they can contaminate soils and water. Purchasing retread tires and refurbished rims mean these products are not sent to landfills. According to EPA, retreading helps divert thousands of scrap tires from disposal every year.

Significance to the District

PPRA	PPRA § 104 specifies that products meet Default Environmental Standards. The U.S. EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines recommend use of retread tires, re-refined motor oils and antifreeze. The EPA Comprehensive Guidelines are a Default Environmental Standard.
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For more information about sustainable specification guidance or the District's Sustainable Purchasing Program, please visit: <http://ocp.dc.gov/page/sustainable-purchasing>, call the OCP Customer Contact Center at: [202.724.4477](tel:202.724.4477) or email sppdc@dc.gov.