



# ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIFICATION GUIDANCE FOR PAPER

*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

### 16 MILLION

BTUs of energy saved each year if 100 office workers in the District use 30% PCRC paper instead of non-recycled paper

Which is the equivalent of **1.6 tons** of greenhouse gas emissions

Additionally, this would save **17,000** gallons of water and **36** trees annually

#### SOURCES

[c.environmentalpaper.org](http://c.environmentalpaper.org)

[www.cleanair.org/Waste/wasteFacts.html](http://www.cleanair.org/Waste/wasteFacts.html)

## Scope

This specification addresses the following types of paper:

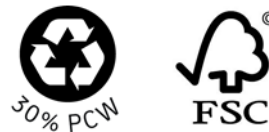
1. Copy, printer, and multi-purpose (all sizes, 20-24 lbs, 92-100 brightness)
2. Roll stock
3. Continuous
4. Construction paper
5. Newsprint
6. Offset

NOTE: Specifications for envelopes, file folders, notepads, napkins, and other office-related paper products can be found under [Office Supplies](#). Specifications for toilet paper and paper towels can be found under [Cleaning Supplies](#).

## Specification Language

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

1. Paper shall contain at least 30% postconsumer recycled content (PCRC).
2. Paper shall be certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).



## 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 name
- b. Contract award date
- c. Contract #
- d. PO #
- e. Product description - manufacturer description of product
- f. Sku
- g. Number of units sold



## Specification Language (continued)

- h. Price per unit
- 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 on the [Sustainable Purchasing Program web page](#) to assist Contractors in meeting the District's EPPS reporting requirements.

## Background Information



### Postconsumer recycled content

**(PCRC)** reflects the proportion of a product recycled from consumer materials that otherwise would have been disposed. For paper, PCRC is measured based on weight, often

referred to as postconsumer waste (PCW). Along with many jurisdictions throughout the country, the [U.S. EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines](#) recommend purchasing uncoated office paper with at least 30% PCRC. Office paper containing 30% PCRC has been proven to perform well and is widely available in the marketplace at costs comparable to non-recycled paper. When buying recycled content paper, purchasers should ensure that the paper is rated for its intended use. Paper rated as multi-purpose meets the needs for copiers, laser printers, and ink jet printers. Other forms of recycled content not included in the specification include pre-consumer recycled content and total recycled content. Pre-consumer recycled content refers to the percent of a product made from manufacturing waste, while total recycled content refers to the sum of the postconsumer and pre-consumer recycled content. Note that the recycled content logo is not required. For more information, see EPA's product category definitions at [epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/tools/cpg/products/define.htm](http://epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/tools/cpg/products/define.htm).



**FSC certification** signifies that the [Forest Stewardship Council](#), an independent, third-party standard setting organization, has certified that a wood or paper product meets or exceeds FSC's criteria for sustainable forestry and supply chain

management. FSC certification requires that forest managers meet FSC's principles and criteria, including promoting biodiversity, protecting indigenous peoples' rights, and eliminating toxic chemical use. In addition, certification requires that each company in the supply chain retain and document FSC-certified content during the processing, manufacturing, and distribution process. FSC certification is highly regarded; it continues to be the only forestry certification recognized by [LEED](#). FSC-certified paper is widely available in the marketplace at costs similar to paper without the certification. FSC labels vary depending on the content they contain (ex. FSC Recycled, 100% Mixed Source, Controlled Wood). Paper products containing any of the available FSC labels meet the FSC requirement of the specification.



## Environmental Hotspots    The most important environmental benefits associated with this specification

ENERGY CONSUMPTION	Transport, processing, and manufacture of 30% PCRC paper uses approximately 10% less total energy than virgin paper production. This results in an approximate 10% decrease in greenhouse gas emissions.
WATER CONSUMPTION	Recycled paper production requires approximately 15% less water throughout its life cycle than virgin paper production.
MATERIALS USE/ SUSTAINABLE SOURCING	The FSC certification signifies that the product originates from sustainably-managed forests and retains its certified content throughout the supply chain. Sustainable forestry ensures that forests are managed in a responsible way and avoid destructive practices like clear cutting.
RECYCLED CONTENT	This specification requires 30% PCRC, which reduces the demand for virgin wood.
END-OF-LIFE DISPOSAL	Recycling paper means that less of it is disposed of in landfills and incinerators.

## Significance to the District

**PPRA**    PPRA § 104 specifies that products meet Default Environmental Standards. U.S. EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines which recommend post-consumer recycled content (PCRC) levels for paper, is a Default Environmental Standard (DES).

**LEED FOR EXISTING BUILDINGS: O&M**    This specification meets the requirements of LEED v4 EBOM. LEED's Materials and Resources: "Purchasing – ongoing" credit requires at least 60% of total purchases of ongoing consumables (by cost) meet at least one specified criterion. The criteria include, but are not limited to, a minimum of the PCRC listed in the U.S. EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (30% for paper) and FSC-certified paper. Each purchase receives credit for each criterion met; a purchase of 30% PCRC, FSC-certified paper would receive double credit towards the 60% of total purchases. To gain one point for this credit, electric-powered equipment must meet a separate list of criteria.

*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 , or email [sppdc@dc.gov](mailto:sppdc@dc.gov).*