



GreenTip
How Do You Measure Up?



Environmentally Preferable Purchasing: How to Decide What's Greener

EPP – environmentally preferable purchasing. With all those companies out there touting their “**green-ness**” it’s hard to know how to choose among them. Which products are **greener**? What services have a smaller carbon footprint? Here’s a helpful checklist to keep in mind when you’re shopping for everything from groceries to home repairs.

What’s in a Green Business Plan?

While an ordinary business plan focuses on developing a product or service based on price, profit margin, safety and performance, a **green** business plan includes another perspective. The goals of a **green** business should be to:

- Preserve natural resources and wildlife habitat;
- Conserve and protect the quality of air, water and land;
- Produce less toxic waste and pollution;
- Protect the health and wellbeing of humans and animals.

When you’re actually out shopping for goods and services, it may not be easy to determine to what extent the producer or service provider has worked to achieve these goals. Here are some of the questions you should ask as you make your purchasing decisions.

EPP Checklist:

- Is this product produced locally to minimize energy used for transport?
- Was this produce grown with organic methods, and is it in season?
- Is this product made from or manufactured using readily renewable resources?
- Is this product made with recycled or reclaimed materials?
- Does the producer recover scrap materials for recycling or reuse to minimize waste?
- Is this product energy efficient?
- Is this product marketed with minimal packaging, and is that packaging recyclable?
- Is this product designed to last for a long time?
- Does this manufacturer utilize pollution control devices and energy saving systems to the greatest extent possible?
- Is this product manufactured without the use of toxic ingredients and materials?
- Can this product be recycled or remanufactured at the end of its life?
- Does this manufacturer accept the responsibility to take back the product for refurbishing or recycling at the end of its life?

You can compare the “**green-ness**” of products or services by the number of times you can answer yes to these questions. Package labels are helpful in determining whether or not ingredients are **green**. When choosing a service provider, read product and company literature carefully, and be prepared to ask questions of company representatives in order to garner enough information to be able to make a **green** selection.

For More Information

Check the EPA's website for more EPP details, and to check out the EPP database:
<http://yosemite1.epa.gov/oppt/eppstand2.nsf>



**When it comes to taking care of our environment...
How do you MEASURE UP?**