



# EPP Update

Issue 12 | January 2003

ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE PURCHASING

Environmentally Preferable Purchasing, or EPP, seeks the overall best value, taking into account price competitiveness, regulatory requirements, performance standards, and environmental impact. Because purchasers typically have clear sources of information on procurement and safety regulations and well-established methods for evaluating price and performance, the U.S. EPA EPP program has developed the *EPP Update* to help government purchasers consider the environmental factors in the EPP equation and to keep purchasers informed of EPP news. For more information about the EPP program's history, tools, and resources, please visit [www.epa.gov/oppt/epp](http://www.epa.gov/oppt/epp).

## Highlights

- Buying Biobased
- New Federal Environmental Executive
- EPA's EPP Goals
- Alternative Fuel Vehicles
- Making Purchases Mercury-Free
- EPP Database
- Green Meetings

## Buying Biobased— Implications of the 2002 Farm Bill

**A** new bill that was recently signed into law promises significant changes to the types of products purchased by the federal government. The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, more commonly referred to as the Farm Bill, governs federal farm programs over the next 6 years and has important implications for federal procurement officials.

EPP aspects of the Farm Bill are similar to EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPG), which address the acquisition of products containing recycled materials. Specifically, Title IX of the 2002 Farm Bill states that any federal agency purchasing more than \$10,000 worth of an item must give preference to goods that are composed of the highest percent biobased content practicable, with the exception of

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## An Interview with John Howard, Federal Environmental Executive

**O**n April 30, 2002, President Bush appointed John L. Howard, Jr. to be the new Federal Environmental Executive. Under Executive Order (EO) 13101, the Federal Environmental Executive (FEE) chairs the White House Task Force on Waste Prevention and Recycling. The Task Force works to provide clear national direction for federal agencies and track government's progress on waste prevention, recycling, and the purchase of recycled-content and environmentally preferable services and products.

Mr. Howard comes to the position after serving as senior associate director at the Council on Environmental Quality, where he worked on the Administration's environmental and natural resources policies. Prior to that, he served from 1996 to 2000 as the environmental and natural resources policy advisor for then-Governor Bush and practiced law in Washington, DC, and Austin, Texas, for 8 years.

The EPP program recently had a chance to talk with Mr. Howard—the interview summary follows.

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## Introducing EPA's EPP Goals!

EPA recently outlined several goals as part of its effort to meet the mandates set forth in Executive Order (EO) 13101, *Greening the Government Through Waste Prevention, Recycling, and Federal Acquisition*, which requires that federal agencies buy products or services that "have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products." While there is always room for improvement in any goal-setting process, these objectives lay out an aggressive path for EPA to follow in buying greener products and services.

Visit [www.epa.gov/oppt/epp/pilot/13101%20goals.htm](http://www.epa.gov/oppt/epp/pilot/13101%20goals.htm) for the full text of EPA's goals. For more information, please contact Bucky Green, chief of EPA's Sustainable Facilities Practices Branch, at 202 564-6371 or [green.bucky@epa.gov](mailto:green.bucky@epa.gov).

### EPA's Dishing Out EPP!

On January 13, EPA opened a new "green" cafeteria, offering employees a variety of environmentally preferable options, from compostable serviceware to sustainably grown coffee. Stay tuned to the next *EPP Update* for more on this exciting EPA EPP success story.

## Excerpts from EPA's EPP Goals for 2005 and 2010

**GOAL:** *To reduce EPA's environmental footprint by increasing and promoting recycling, reducing materials entering EPA's waste stream, promoting and achieving increased and preferential use of materials with recycled content, and emphasizing and increasing the purchase and use of environmentally preferable products.*

### GREEN BUILDINGS

**Objective:** Have all of EPA's significant new facility construction and new building acquisition projects meet the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED™ silver standard by 2005. Commit to use the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED™ new Commercial Interiors and Existing Building standards by 2005 on at least one appropriate project where space in an existing building is acquired. Request that GSA provide new major office leases that meet the ENERGY STAR® requirements.

### GREEN JANITORIAL AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES

**Objective:** "Green" all significant EPA janitorial and maintenance services contracts by 2010.

### GREEN COPY PAPER AND PUBLICATIONS

**Objective:** All printing paper products used by EPA are to meet the standards of the "New Environmental Standards for EPA Paper and Publications" set forth by memorandum of January 2001. This standard sets as the standard for paper and publications as 100 percent recycled, minimum 50 percent post-consumer content paper. Whenever possible,



# EPA's Executive Order 13101 Goals

this paper should also be “Processed Chlorine Free.” Some paper stocks, especially color paper stocks, may not be readily available with this content standard. When this situation arises, a minimum 30 percent postconsumer content is required. (Products mentioned in this section include but are not limited to the following applications: copy paper, printing paper, letterhead, envelopes, and color paper.)

## GREEN MEETINGS

**Objective:** Make an effort to “green” all meetings planned or funded by EPA no later than 2005.

## GREEN OFFICE SUPPLIES

**Objective:** Buy all office supplies through EPA's tailored green online ordering system by 2005.

## GREEN ELECTRONICS

**Objective:** By 2005, the agency will attempt to have all electronic purchases to include environmental aspects in the decision-making process—beyond just price and performance. (Electronic equipment includes, but is not limited to, televisions and monitors, computers, computer peripherals, audio equipment, VCRs, DVD players, fax and copying machines, cellular phones, and other wireless devices.)

## GREEN FLEETS

**Objective:** To achieve compliance with the legislative mandates of the Energy Policy Act and EO 13149, EPA will increase the acquisition of alternatively fueled vehicles each fiscal year and increase the use of alternative fuels each fiscal year.

## GREEN LANDSCAPING

**Objective:** All new significant acquisitions of landscaping shall be water conserving; use regionally appropriate native plant species; require Integrated Pest Management (IPM); consider storm water management and low-impact development techniques; minimize the use of herbicides, fungicides, and fertilizers; and maximize the use of recycled landscaping materials and appropriate CPG products. Existing landscaping shall be converted to green landscaping as opportunities present themselves.

## GREEN POWER

**Objective:** Continue to add at least one new facility a year to its list of facilities served by renewable power through 2010.

## RECYCLING AND WASTE PREVENTION

**Objective:** Increase and promote recycling and reduce materials entering EPA's waste stream through 2010.

*David J O'Connor*

for Morris X. Winn, Assistant Administrator  
Office of Administration and Resources Management

10/21/02

Date



# Drawing A Road Map for

## What are AFVs?

Alternative fuel vehicles, as described by EO 13149, use any of the following as an alternate fuel source:

- Alcohols, such as methanol or denatured ethanol (M-85 or E-85).
- Natural gas (compressed and liquified).
- Liquefied petroleum gas.
- Electricity (including solar energy).
- Hydrogen.
- Coal-derived liquid fuels.
- Fuels derived from biological materials (including biodiesel).

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) contracts for more than \$1 billion in non-tactical vehicles annually. Those sedans, pickup trucks, and other vehicles present a unique opportunity to buy green, from purchasing retread tires and re-refined or biobased oil, to ensuring the vehicles contain no or low mercury and PVC. Federal fleets also allow agencies the chance to increase the fuel efficiency and decrease the petroleum-based fuel consumption of vehicles sold in the United States via federal government purchasing power.

In 1992, Congress passed the Energy Policy Act (EPAct), which directed federal agencies to assume the lead in reducing vehicular petroleum consumption by requiring that 75 percent of vehicle acquisitions in an agency's covered fleet be alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs). In April 2000, the President signed Executive Order (EO) 13149, Greening the Government through Federal Fleet and Transportation Efficiency. This EO directed each agency operating 20 or more motor vehicles in the United States to reduce its entire fleet's annual petroleum consumption by at least 20 percent by the end of FY 2005, as compared with FY 1999 consumption levels. The order outlines two primary methods for achieving 20 percent petroleum reduction—use of alternative fuels in AFVs and acquisition of higher fuel economy vehicles. John Howard, the Federal Environmental Executive, has confirmed that the Bush Administration is retaining EO 13149 and expects federal agencies to comply. Together EO 13149 and EPAct provide a comprehensive strategy to reduce petroleum consumption.

So how are federal agencies doing in meeting the EPAct goals? Despite a

recent lawsuit brought against the federal government for not meeting its AFV purchase quotas outlined in EPAct, two-thirds of the 18 agencies have met or exceeded their AFV purchasing goals. As of 2001, the federal government had over 55,000 AFVs in its fleets—only 5,000 short of the stated EPAct goals

Unfortunately, lack of infrastructure (e.g., not enough alternative fueling stations) hinders a number of agencies from actually running their AFVs on alternative fuels. (Many AFVs are “dual fuel vehicles,” meaning they can run on gasoline or alternative fuels.) This is starting to change, according to Shabnam Fardanesh, manager of the U.S. Department of Energy's Federal Fleet AFV Program. “Several agencies are beginning to put alternative fuel infrastructures in place to meet the EO 13149 goals by 2005. Some sites are working on these infrastructure projects in partnership with other federal agencies, state or local governments, or private sector entities in their areas,” says Fardanesh.

Some agencies, despite having alternative fueling stations available and close-by, find it difficult to get their employees to use these stations. One federal agency employee pointed out that the facilities group had used every opportunity to educate employees on filling dual fuel vehicles with alternative fuel. However, top managers have not told their staff that filling the AFVs with alternative fuel is a requirement that must be met. As a result, employees fill AFVs with gasoline more often than with alternative fuels due to time constraints. Other facility representatives say that the frequent switch to vehicles that run on new alternative fuels (first methanol, then CNG, and now ethanol) makes it more time-consuming to educate employees, and



# Green Vehicle Acquisitions

hard to build and maintain infrastructures to support these changes.

EO 13149 also encourages agencies to reduce petroleum fuel use by acquiring higher fuel economy vehicles. Hybrid-electric vehicles, which combine internal combustion engines with an electric motor assist, help agencies reduce petroleum consumption through higher fuel economy. Hybrids do not fall under the definition of AFVs under EPA's Act, however, because they are currently not capable of running on alternative fuel. Nevertheless, there is still a strong demand for hybrids in the government, and as a result, GSA added the Honda Civic hybrid to its schedule (starting in FY 2003) and allows federal purchasers interested in buying the Toyota Prius hybrid a waiver to acquire one directly from a dealership.

Efforts are also underway in Congress to break down the current EPA's Act barrier to buying hybrids. As of September 20, 2002, the hotly debated Energy Bill included provisions that would allow federal agencies to get a partial credit toward meeting their AFV purchase quotas for each hybrid vehicle acquired. The bill would also require all agencies to use

alternative fuels in their AFVs, unless the alternative fuel is not "reasonably available" or is "unreasonably more expensive compared to gasoline," and give partial credits to agencies for investing in building an alternative fuel infrastructure or educating and training employees about filling up agency AFVs with alternative fuels. (To see the most recent publicly-available text language, go to <[www.thomas.loc.gov](http://www.thomas.loc.gov)>.)

For more information about EO 13149 and EPA's Act, visit the Federal Fleet Program Web site, <[www.ott.doe.gov/epact/fed\\_fleet\\_prog.shtml](http://www.ott.doe.gov/epact/fed_fleet_prog.shtml)>.

For more information on GSA's hybrid offerings, contact Denise Banks at <[denise.banks@gsa.gov](mailto:denise.banks@gsa.gov)> (for information on sedans and light trucks) or Walter Eckbreth at <[walter.eckbreth@gsa.gov](mailto:walter.eckbreth@gsa.gov)> (for information on medium and heavy trucks).

For a list of current resources on how to green your fleet, browse EPA's EPP Database at <[www.epa.gov/oppt/epp/database.htm](http://www.epa.gov/oppt/epp/database.htm)>, and go to the "automotive aisle" or search on "cars."

**Some purchasers have wondered if using alternative fuels really has a reduced environmental impact when the entire life cycle of alternative fuel production is considered (e.g., the petroleum used to farm, process, and manufacture a crop used for biodiesel). The Greenhouse Gases, Regulated Emissions, and Energy Use in Transportation (GREET) model developed by Argonne National Laboratory (available at <<http://greet.anl.gov>>) is a comprehensive tool to help evaluate life cycle energy and emission effects of AFVs.**

## Ideas for Greening Your Fleet

1. Buy alternative fuel, high fuel efficiency, or hybrid vehicles.
2. Run aggressive fleet maintenance programs, including the use of retread tires and re-refined or biobased oil.
3. Award bonus points in your RFP selection process for vehicles with no or low mercury or PVC content and for manufacturers with environmental management systems in place.
4. Offer training and provide visible top management support for employees to encourage them to use alternative fuels.

motor vehicle fuel and electricity. The bill defines a biobased product as “a commercial or industrial product (other than food or feed) that is composed, in whole or in significant part, of biological products or renewable domestic agricultural materials (including plant, animal, and marine materials) or forestry materials.”

Several provisions in Title IX simplify the procurement process for officials. For example, in consultation with EPA, the General Services Administration, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is required to

prepare final guidelines within 180 days of the enactment of the bill. The guidelines will:

- Designate items that are or can be procured with biobased content.
- Recommend practices for procurement and vendor certification of biobased products.
- Provide information about the availability, relative price, performance, and environmental and public health benefits of these materials.
- Recommend the level of biobased material to be contained in procured products.

In conjunction with these final guidelines, USDA will establish a voluntary biobased products labeling program as well as a voluntary program that recognizes federal agencies and private entities that procure substantial amounts of biobased products.

Title IX also requires that, within 1 year after the publication of the final guidelines, each federal agency develop a procurement program that contains, at a minimum:

- A biobased products preference program.
- An agency program to promote the preference program.
- An annual review and monitoring component to determine the effectiveness of the procurement program.

Beginning in 2003, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy must use these reviews to report to Congress every 2 years on actions taken by federal agencies and progress made in the Act's implementation.

For more information, please contact the EPP program's James Darr at 202 564-8841 or <darr.james@epa.gov>.



USDA plans to designate biobased products in the following 11 categories:

- Adhesives
- Construction materials and composites
- Fibers, paper, and packaging
- Fuel additives
- Landscaping products and compost
- Lubricants and functional fluids
- Plastics
- Paints and coatings
- Solvents, cleaners, and agricultural chemicals
- Sorbents
- Vegetable oil inks

To view a copy of Title IX of the 2002 Farm Bill and learn more about its implications for federal procurement officials, visit <[www.usda.gov/farmbill/conference\\_report/title9.pdf](http://www.usda.gov/farmbill/conference_report/title9.pdf)>. For more information on green purchasing, visit EPA's EPP Web site at <[www.epa.gov/oppt/epp](http://www.epa.gov/oppt/epp)>.



## Did You Buy Any Mercury Today?

# Recognizing Mercury-Containing Products and Their Alternatives

**E**PA would like to thank INFORM for contributing this article. INFORM is a national nonprofit research organization that examines business practices, technologies, and products that threaten the environment, waste natural resources, or put human health at risk. INFORM's environmental solutions are used by government, industry, and environmental leaders worldwide.

You may not realize it, but chances are you recently purchased a product that contains mercury. Don't be so surprised—after all, mercury's unique ability to conduct electricity has proven invaluable in the consumer products industry, where it is used to manufacture hundreds of items, from toys to medicine. Mercury contamination poses a major threat to human health and the environment, however, because it is a persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic (PBT) pollutant. Mercury contamination—much of it stemming from the incineration of mercury-containing products as well as the production of electricity from coal-fired power plants—is now at crisis levels in many areas of the United States.

Identifying some of the products and processes responsible for mercury contamination is the first step toward empowering consumers to

purchase products that protect human health and the environment. While there is no complete list of every mercury-containing product on the market, common items include thermometers, thermostats, electrical switches, batteries, gas appliances, cleaning solutions, lamps, and blood-pressure equipment. Automobiles also contain large amounts of mercury, which is discharged from steel smelters when used cars are recycled. Fortunately, several mercury-free substitutes are readily available, price-competitive, and often sold by the same vendors that sell mercury-containing products. Alternatives for these products use technologies and mechanisms (e.g., aneroid, electronic, or digital) to replace mercury.

Some life cycle trade-off issues, however, can complicate the choice to eliminate mercury from purchases. For example, facilities and homes

### For More Information

Although federal purchasers must come to their own conclusions about which products to buy, INFORM is available to assist federal agencies interested in mercury-free purchasing. Contact Lara Sutherland at <sutherland@informinc.org> or 303 377-7048.

For more information on PBTs, visit <www.epa.gov/pbt>.

INFORM offers a list of mercury-containing products and alternatives at <www.informinc.org/fsmercalt.pdf>.

INFORM has specifications for buying mercury-free medical supplies at <www.informinc.org/p3\_10.php>.

For more information on specifying mercury-free cars, see <www.cleancarcampaign.org> and <www.informinc.org/p3\_09.php>.

Massachusetts established a fluorescent lamp contract requiring lamp vendors to promote lamp recycling (see <ftp.comm-pass.com/Data/00110701.pdf>).

## Persistent, Bioaccumulative, and Toxic Pollutants

Mercury enters the environment, and ultimately our bodies, through a very direct process. When products and processes release mercury into the air, it often falls into our lakes and streams or onto the ground where it leeches into ground-water supplies. Microorganisms transform the mercury into methyl mercury, which then accumulates in living organisms. Fish, birds, and humans, among other living organisms, cannot break down methyl mercury and, thus, mercury accumulates in our bodies as it travels up the food chain. Studies indicate that babies of women who eat large quantities of mercury-contaminated fish show increased neurological, developmental, and behavioral problems, and recent evidence suggests that adults who consume large amounts of contaminated fish are also susceptible to neurological and other problems stemming from mercury poisoning. Contact with mercury from broken thermometers and other means also increases our exposure.

# EPP Database Expands Again

Always striving to improve the information it provides to users, the EPP Program recently completed another extensive update of its Database of Environmental Information for Products and Services. The database now includes more information than ever, including 130 contracts and 523 standards. The database now links to many new sites, such as BlueGreen Meetings <[www.bluegreenmeetings.org](http://www.bluegreenmeetings.org)> and EPA's Green Vehicle Guide <[www.epa.gov/greenvehicles](http://www.epa.gov/greenvehicles)>, which further assist users in identifying environmentally preferable goods and services. In addition, the Massachusetts RFP for cleaning products meeting Green Seal's standard was added to the database. Several government agencies plan on using this RFP as a template for similar green contracts.

EPA also continues to make the database more user friendly by making structural changes. Perhaps the most obvious change is a further enhancement to the search engine. For example, users now have the ability to search using keywords, so they are much more likely to get the results they are looking for. The EPP program also has identified additional standards that were developed through voluntary consensus means and plans to highlight them in the database at some point in the near future.

To ensure the database continues to meet the needs of its users in helping to identify and procure environmentally preferable products, the EPP Program is actively seeking additional information for the next update of the database. In response to comments received,

the database will offer more direct access to existing vendor lists of products meeting specific environmental performance standards and guidelines established by a number of government and third-party organizations. Anyone with new information or suggestions on how to improve the database should contact Jesse Eaves at 202 564-8867 or <[eaves.jesse@epa.gov](mailto:eaves.jesse@epa.gov)>. Please let Jesse know of URLs linking to green contracts or contract language as well.



Mercury < Continued from page 7 >

throughout the country use fluorescent lamps that contain mercury. Fluorescent lamps conserve electricity, however, and thus reduce mercury emissions from power plants. An analysis of these pros and cons indicates that continuing to use fluorescent lamps for their energy efficient properties is preferable, but users should prevent the mercury in the lamps from polluting the environment by sending the lamps to a recycler instead of disposing of them when they burn out. Sending fluorescent lamps, even those claiming to be "low-mercury," to a reputable lamp recycler ensures proper handling and disposal with minimal mercury pollution. As this example indicates, environmentally conscious consumers must weigh multiple environ-

mental attributes and impacts of certain products throughout their entire life cycle.

While examining the environmental attributes of all the products we buy is important, purchasing mercury-free products reduces the risk of occupational exposure, decreases the costs of hazardous waste disposal, and prevents mercury pollution in the environment.

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*This article should not be interpreted as an EPA endorsement of INFORM, nor should agencies feel obligated to utilize the technical assistance of this or other such entities. We've published this article as an educational resource.*



# Web Site Offers Green Meetings Resources

**A** new interactive Web site developed by the Oceans Blue Foundation aims to inform professional meeting planners, service providers, and the public of environmental issues to consider when planning “green” meetings and events. Oceans Blue is a Canadian charity that works to conserve marine and terrestrial environments by promoting environmentally responsible tourism and developing best practice standards for all sectors of the tourism industry. The BlueGreen Meetings Web site ([www.bluegreenmeetings.org](http://www.bluegreenmeetings.org))—which provides tips for planning and supplying environmentally responsible meetings, a links section, and a free e-mail newsletter—was enabled through an EPA grant issued in 2001 to help boost the market for greener products and services.

With easy access to new resources and ideas for planning environmentally preferable meetings, the BlueGreen Meetings site can function as a one-stop resource for industry professionals. “We hope the Web site will help create an online community where meeting planners and suppliers can easily share and research information,” said Shawna McKinley, program manager at Oceans Blue. The site encourages best practices by providing a Success Stories section, where individuals can submit information about their own accomplishments to be featured on the site. “This might help people see the benefits, both environmentally and economically, of planning a green meeting,” McKinley said.

The Web site is divided into two sections—one for hosts and planners and one for suppliers. Both sec-

tions offer guidelines and additional online resources for industry professionals. The Hosts and Planners section of the site offers 10 easy tips for greener meetings (e.g., electronic registration, locating meetings in areas that are convenient to most attendees) and a quiz that allows meeting planners to find out how their choices affect the environment. Based on the results of the quiz, users are encouraged to visit certain sections of the Web site to see what they can do to further reduce the effect meetings have on the environment. The Hosts and Planners section also covers topics such as destinations, accommodations, venues, transportation, food and beverage, exhibit production, and communications.

The Supplier section of the site focuses on the same areas, only from the supplier’s perspective. For example, the Accommodations section offers ways hotels can save on water and energy consumption, making their facilities more attractive to meeting planners looking for hotels with environmental features. In addition, the site’s Convention and Visitors Bureaux (CVB) section provides a sample survey for a CVB to send to hotels and venues in order to find out what “green” features are offered. The section also provides guidelines for increasing environmental and sustainable practices among CVB members.

For more information on BlueGreen Meetings, visit the Oceans Blue Web site at [www.oceansblue.org](http://www.oceansblue.org), or e-mail [bluegreenmeetings@oceansblue.org](mailto:bluegreenmeetings@oceansblue.org) for further updates on the project.





### What do you hope to bring to the position of FEE?

First, I'm very excited to have been appointed by President Bush to be the new Federal Environmental Executive. The President has called on federal agencies and employees to lead by example, to be good neighbors, and to be good environmental stewards. We are busy working to implement the current "greening the government" executive orders, and we're looking for new and improved ways to be better stewards.

The FEE position has grown over the years, and under President Bush, we are taking the role another step in its evolution. We have adopted a new mission statement: "Promoting sustainable federal environmental stewardship throughout the federal government." That's a pretty broad mandate, so we've developed several priorities on which to focus:

- Improving federal government recycling.
- Purchasing green products, including biobased products.
- Boosting the federal government's sustainable building practices.
- Improving the federal government's stewardship of electronic products.
- Promoting the implementation of industrial ecology.

- Promoting the use of environmental management systems as tools to ensure that the federal government is complying with the law, incorporating environmental considerations in its daily and long-term decision making, and developing sustainable practices.

### Do you have any advice for federal agencies trying to sort out and comply with multiple environmental directives (e.g., EOs 13101 and 13149, Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPG), biobased initiatives)?

The growth of such directives—and the resulting growth in demand for green products—is a great opportunity for the federal government to lead by example and help create markets for green products. Neither the statutes nor the executive orders prioritize attributes or particular products among the growing range of green products. So the marching orders are to do all you can to meet these requirements.

Frankly, while sorting out attributes may be an issue in the future, today the issue is one of education and training—and making it as easy as possible for federal officials to buy green products.

I'm pretty excited about the future. Just in FY 2001, the federal government purchased \$500 million worth of CPG products. We're working on improved training and education to get the word to more folks. Agencies are identifying ways to make it easier to buy these products—including EPA's new online green office supply proposal. And we have a new congressional and presidential directive in this area, the 2002 Farm Bill, which requires federal agencies to buy biobased

products. (See the article on page 1 of this newsletter.)

We're working to encourage all the different green product programs and vendors to think of themselves as part of a much bigger team. I believe that the various green product programs—biobased, energy efficiency, water conservation, recycled content, environmentally preferable, and alternative/renewable fuels—are mature enough that we should integrate them. This would not remove their individual identities or take them out of their agency homes; rather, it would bring the programs and officials together to strategize, share successes and failures, and build common strength. In the end, our job is to make it as easy as possible for purchasers to buy these goods, and all our energies should be focused on that task.

That's why we're excited by EPA's idea to host a Green Products Trade Fair next year featuring a range of green products, including biobased products. The idea is to bring together vendors and the federal purchasing community, so people can see and touch the products and ask all the questions they have about a product's performance, quality, and cost.

We're interested in obtaining feedback about how to help agencies comply with these different directives. One idea is to use the Building for Environmental and

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**An EPA-sponsored Green Products Conference and Trade Fair is being planned for the spring of 2004. Please stay tuned for more information on how you might be able to participate.**

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Economic Sustainability (BEES) model to assess the life cycle costs and benefits of such products, which will prioritize at least some environmental attributes. Alternatively, an umbrella program, based on the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED™) model of green buildings, could incorporate all the different green product programs.

**EO 13101 promotes the federal government's purchase of recycled-content and other environmentally preferable products and services. How should an agency resolve potentially conflicting information from different green purchasing programs? For example, the CPG program encourages purchasers to buy recycled-content sorbents, while USDA's biobased program will promote reusable biobased sorbents, which are not necessarily recycled-content. What criteria should an agency use to make a purchasing decision?**

EO 13101 was established to bring together the green purchasing programs under one umbrella. The green purchasing programs have now been around for several years and we are working hard to reduce

conflict and coordinate information when possible. For example, CPG in the Office of Solid Waste and EPP in the Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics, both within EPA, are working together on the Green Products Trade Fair. Another example is the U.S. Department of Energy's "Buy Bio" monthly forums, which bring together members of federal green purchasing and affirmative procurement programs to coordinate and provide input on the development of USDA's biobased program.

Finally, one of the most important ways to help coordinate all these efforts is through the use of environmental management systems, which offer agencies, facilities, and organizations the opportunity to strategically chart their course forward, develop metrics to test their performance, and continually seek ways to improve their operations.

**What can be done to increase green purchasing within the federal government?**

There are probably a million things, but I'll put them in just two categories: education and convenience. We need to get information to more federal employees who are purchasing goods and services. And we need

to make sure that it is as easy as possible to buy green products.

We are working to improve awareness of the green purchasing requirements and ensure that the federal employees who are actually specifying products and services for purchase are able to easily locate information about preferable environmental attributes. In addition to regular training, e-mail messages, and credit card bill fliers, we will also look to identify and praise the champions of green purchasing as a visible testament to what can be done.

For more information, visit [www.ofee.gov](http://www.ofee.gov).

**As part of his work to influence key decisionmakers to increase federal purchases of green products and services, John Howard spoke to the Procurement Executives Council (PEC) on October 3, 2002. PEC members are the top managers of each federal agency's procurement operations offices, and the PEC acts as an information-sharing body for these managers. For more information, visit [www.pec.gov](http://www.pec.gov).**

## Share your EPP Success Stories!

The EPP Web site has a new list of federal EPP pilot projects. The Federal Pilot Project list, accessible at [www.epa.gov/oppt/epp/pilot/index.htm](http://www.epa.gov/oppt/epp/pilot/index.htm), contains 95 entries describing federal green purchasing efforts. Categorized by product or service (e.g., cleaning products, green engineering and building), the pilot projects are organized by federal agency/department, and each contains a brief description and contact information. The EPP program would like to add your agency's EPP successes to this list. Let us know how you've greened your federal purchases by contacting Megan Johnson at 202 564-8861 or [johnson.megan@epa.gov](mailto:johnson.megan@epa.gov).

# Let's Stay In Contact

The EPP Program maintains an extensive database of contacts, which, in the past, has been used as a mailing list for distributing printed copies of the *EPP Update*. Because this database contains several thousand names, we believe it could be an ideal tool for expanded communications to help you stay informed about green purchasing mandates and opportunities.

In the future, the EPP Program would like to begin sending monthly e-mail announcements, including information on new tools, publications, and events, as well as stories and best practices in different EPP areas.

To improve the electronic distribution of this information to interested parties, the EPP Program needs to hear from you. So whether you are already in the database or you would like to be added to it, please send the following information to <epp@erg.com>:

- Name
- Name of organization
- Type of organization (federal, state, or local government; academia; industry; nonprofit; international; other)
- Address
- Phone number
- E-mail address

If you are not interested in receiving these new monthly announcements, please indicate this in your e-mail message.

In addition, in an effort to conserve resources and reduce the EPP Program's impact on the environment, we will begin distributing the *EPP Update* electronically (as a PDF file). If you would like to continue receiving a hard copy printed on environmentally preferable paper, please indicate this in your message.

Thank you for your assistance in this effort. If you have any questions, please contact Alison Kinn of EPA at 202 564-8859 or <kinn.alison@epa.gov>.

Pollution Prevention and Toxics  
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