

Issue No. 12
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GSA s t e p s

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GSA's New
Environmental Aisle

GSA's new Environmental Aisle is designed to allow federal agencies to conveniently purchase thousands of environmentally friendly products and services. Like *GSA Advantage!*[®], the Environmental Aisle is an entirely free vehicle for contractors to market federal agencies.

It is GSA's policy to facilitate the acquisition of environmental products by offering products that comply with all federal environmental laws and regulations. The Environmental Aisle contains important information on Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Part 23 requirements, Executive Orders and other various environmental laws. The Environmental Aisle also has a link to a listing of environmental symbols used in *GSA Advantage!*[®] that includes descriptions for each symbol.

The Environmental Aisle can be accessed from the *GSA Advantage!*[®] website at: <http://www.gsadvantage.gov> under *Special Categories*. Click on *Environmental*.

When a federal customer searches for environmental items on the Environmental Aisle:

- The results will display only those items that are environmental
- Only items with environmental indicators

GSA's New Environmental Aisle

Why Offer Green Products?

Why go green?

Ways to Go Green

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(symbols) will be shown

- A custom search can be conducted for a single or multiple environmental indicators

Don't forget: GSAR 552.238-72 Identification of Products that have Environmental Attributes (Sep 2003) requires contractors to highlight environmental products under Federal Supply Service schedule contracts in various communications media (e.g., publications and electronic formats). Therefore, it is important to make sure your online and hardcopy pricelist displays appropriate environmental symbols for each compliant product offered.

incumbent on contractors to provide federal procurement officials with products that meet or exceed environmental requirements.

Why go green?

The federal government is the largest purchaser of products in the United States. Going green will increase your firm's competitive edge when contracting with federal agencies.

Why Offer Green Products?

Today, the federal government is making a concerted effort to maximize the "greening" of all procurements. Why?

Because "greener" products have a better effect on human health and the environment. Did you know that each federal agency is required to establish a preference for products with environmental attributes such as those recommended under the EPA's Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPG)

and Energy Star programs and the Department of Agriculture (USDA) Bio-based Product guidelines? In order to comply with federal regulations and requirements, procurement officials are now considering the environmental impact and product attributes of each acquisition.

Consideration of the environment begins with acquisition planning. Product environmental attributes are increasingly being included as evaluation factors and consideration of the environment may impact contract award. It is

*"Don't blow it —
good planets are
hard to find."
— Time magazine*

Ways to Go Green

- 1) Research products associated with environmental guidelines. Below is a list of important environmental procurement guideline websites:

- GSA Environmental Products:
<http://www.gsa.gov/enviro>
- The EPA CPG Program:
<http://www.epa.gov/cpg>
- ENERGY STAR® and FEMP:
<http://www.energystar.gov/products>
<http://eere.energy.gov/femp/procurement>

- The USDA Bio-based Products Preferred Procurement Program:
<http://www.biobased.oce.usda.gov>

- 2) Market your green products:
 - Apply the applicable environmental symbol to your product posting on *GSA Advantage!*® (appropriately label your green product in all procurement systems and lists).
 - Use marketing strategies that will highlight products that meet or exceed requirements.

Subcontracting Alert

Should You Be Submitting a Subcontracting Plan?

A subcontracting plan is required for federal contracts awarded to Large Businesses when the estimated contract dollar value is expected to exceed \$500,000 for products and services (\$1 million for construction; refer to FAR 19.704 Subcontract Plan Requirements). The contractor is required to establish a subcontracting plan with specific dollar and percent goals for subcontracting to small, HUBZone small, small disadvantaged, women-owned small, veteran-owned small, and service-disabled veteran-owned small business firms prior to the award being made.

For multi-year contracts or contracts containing options, the cumulative value of the basic contract and all options is considered in determining whether the threshold will be met and whether a subcontracting plan is necessary. Since GSA requires minimum annual sales of \$25,000, we expect all Large Business prime contractors to submit a subcontracting plan.

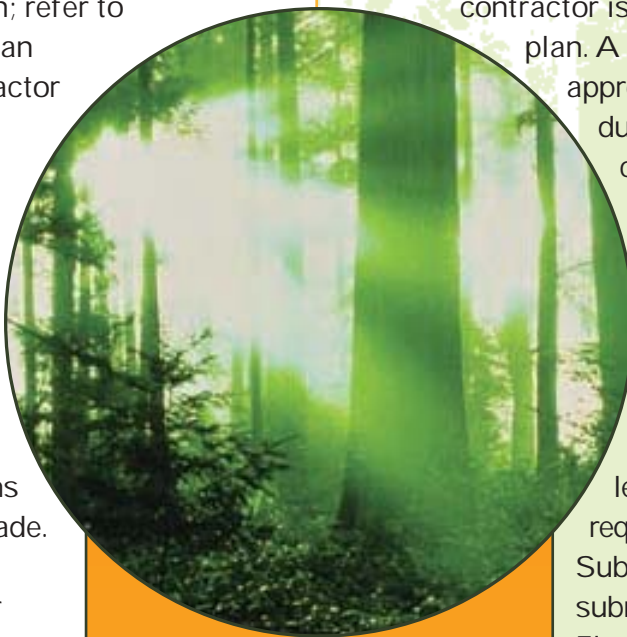
Should an offeror fail to negotiate a subcontracting plan acceptable to the contracting officer within the time limit prescribed by the contracting officer, the offer

will be ineligible for award.

A commercial plan is the preferred type of subcontracting plan for contractors furnishing commercial items. The commercial plan shall relate to the offeror's planned subcontracting generally, for both commercial and government business, rather than solely to the government contract. Commercial plans are also preferred for subcontractors that provide commercial items under a prime contract, whether or not the prime contractor is supplying a commercial plan. A commercial plan once approved by the first agency, during the year-long period covered by the plan, is applicable to all additional contracts for commercial products awarded by any civilian or military federal government agency during that same 12-month period. Also, a commercial plan is less burdensome in reporting requirements. Only a Summary Subcontract Report must be submitted annually in the Electronic Subcontracting Reporting System (eSRS). The Individual Subcontract Report is not required.

The requirement to submit a subcontracting plan does not apply to:

- Small businesses
- Contracts under the prescribed dollar amounts
- Prime contracts not offering subcontracting possibilities
- Contracts to be performed entirely outside the United States.



*"The elevator
to success is
out of order.
You'll have to
use the stairs...
one step at a time."
—Joe Girard*