

Green Purchasing & Consumption

CREATED BY YOUR STUDENT
SUSTAINABILITY EDUCATION
COORDINATORS

CAL_SSEC@YAHOO.COM
RECYCLE.BERKELEY.EDU/SSEC

LINKS

www.stopwaste.org/purchasing

www.worldwatch.org/pubs/goodstuff

www.greenhome.com

www.coopamerica.org

www.greenseal.org

www.gpp.org

www.newdream.org

WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?

From common everyday needs to the occasional celebratory splurge, everybody at some point in his life dishes out money to purchase something.

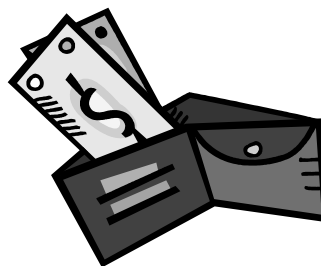
People spend a lot of time thinking about how and where to spend their hard-earned money, and rightly so. Not only do their purchases affect their future satisfaction, but they also send a message to manufacturers and stores about what's important to their customers.

This is where an informed choice can make a big difference. By purchasing environmentally-friendly products—"green purchasing" - we let companies and manufacturers

know that we care about what we buy and what it comes packaged in. Since they depend on consumers to stay in business, they have good reason to take our concerns and preferences seriously.

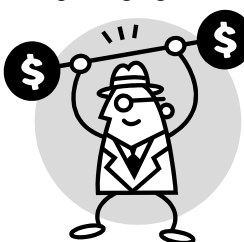
Likewise, avoid purchasing things just for the sake of purchasing them—make sure you'll really need it and will use it.

Vote with your dollars—it really works!



HOW CAN I HELP?

- Avoid over-consumption. Don't buy unless you really need it. You'll save both money and space.
- Buy used if possible. Don't replace anything that isn't really and truly broken.
- Buy in bulk whenever possible. The smaller the amount, the more packaging is ultimately used.



- Buy items in packaging that contains recycled material or can be easily recycled, such as paper,

cardboard, or #1 & #2 plastic. Avoid PVC plastic (that hard plastic casing that is super-tough to open) and Styrofoam.

- Buy environmentally-friendly items, such as cleaners without harsh chemicals, recycled-content paper, energy-efficient electronics, etc.
- Instead of replacing broken appliances, get them fixed. You'll save money and reduce the amount of trash in our landfills.
- Buy organic foods—it's better for the environment and it's better for YOU.

SOME QUICK FACTS:

- *The average American consumes about 53 times more goods and services than someone from China.*
- *The average American consumes nearly 750 lbs of paper each year, the highest in the world.*
- *A child born in the U.S. will use 35 times more resources in his or her lifetime than a child born in India.*
- *In 2000, more Americans filed for bankruptcy than graduated from college.*
- *Using one ton of 100% post-consumer recycled paper instead of "virgin" paper saves 17 trees, 4,100 kwh of energy (enough to power the average home for 6 months), 7,000 gallons of water, 3 cubic yards of landfill space and also keeps more than 60 pounds of pollution out of the air.*
- *One third of our garbage is packaging that is immediately thrown away just to get to the product we purchased.*



Printed on reused paper