

Green Printing Best Practices

Tips for Alameda County Agencies and Departments

- ☑ **Select a certified [Green Business Printer](http://www.greenbiz.ca.gov/)** (www.greenbiz.ca.gov/)
 - Certified printers have shown their commitment to improving their operations and promoting green printing practices to their customers.

- ☑ **Specify preferable papers like recycled content and process chlorine-free**
 - Always specify a minimum of 30% post-consumer recycled content for plain and colored copy paper (#20 & #24 bond), envelopes, business cards, and NCR (carbonless) forms.
 - Ask your vendor for recycled content for other paper types specific to your project.
 - Ask your vendor for process chlorine-free papers, when available, to reduce pollution associated with chlorine bleaching.
 - Limit the use of dark or brightly colored papers, as they are more difficult to recycle.

- ☑ **Design your project to reduce paper use and ink waste**
 - Minimize pages – Work with the project designer to condense or trim material.
 - Use both sides of paper – Design the project to be double-sided.
 - Use the lightest paper weight – For example, choose 20# over 24# for day-to-day printing.
 - Don't run color to edge – Designing color to the edge of the sheet requires printing on larger sheets and trimming edges to get the "color bleed" effect.
 - Choose a standard size for your project to maximize the number of pages per parent sheet.

- ☑ **Use environmentally preferable inks and safer printing chemicals**
 - Minimize large color areas in design – Use pastel color paper instead of printing large color areas to reduce the amount of ink needed.
 - Use printing chemicals and inks with low or no volatile organic compounds (VOCs) to reduce pollution and improved air quality.
 - Specify the use of soy or vegetable-based inks (with low VOC) – These are less toxic than petroleum based inks, are renewable and have proven themselves to be an effective alternative.
 - Ask your printer to use safer alternatives to perchloroethylene, trichloroethylene and/or methylene chloride in their roller blanket washes to protect human health and the environment.

- ☑ **Specialty finishes and the finishing touches**
 - Minimize finishing coatings – When they are necessary, use non-catalytic cured, water-based lacquer or UV coatings. These are gentler on the environment and the paper is easier to recycle.
 - Emboss instead of foil stamp to reduce waste.
 - Label the use of recycled content, chlorine-free paper, or alternative inks on your project.
 - Request reusable or minimal packaging of the finished product.

- ☑ **Reduce, reuse, and recycle to save valuable resources**
 - Create a word template for Agency/Department letterhead that can be easily modified when necessary instead of using pre-printing letterhead that must be recycled when outdated.
 - Do online outreach and move documents and services online for on-demand customer access.
 - Purge your mailing lists regularly and delete duplicates.
 - If you have outdated material that is reusable, donate it to a creative arts program. Search the Recycling Wizard at www.Stopwaste.Org for reuse options. Recycle what can't be reused.