



I. 8.4.1 Environmental Policy Statement

Chapter 8 - Health & Safety	Original Effective Date: June 2000
Section: 8.4 Environmental Policy Statement	Date Last Reviewed: December 2024
Responsible Entity: Vice President for Facilities and Capital Planning	Date Last Revised: December 2021

II. Purpose

UT Health San Antonio will employ best practice in accordance with environmental legislation and principles to ensure environmental responsibility and sustainable practices are integrated in all aspects of University activities.

III. Scope

This policy applies to all UT Health San Antonio faculty, staff, students, suppliers and those engaged in University activities at UT Health San Antonio.

IV. Policy

UT Health San Antonio faculty, staff and students will specify recycled and environmentally preferable products whenever practical. UT Health San Antonio's Purchasing Office will solicit the use of recycled and other environmentally preferred products in its procurement documents whenever practical. Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) will monitor and support the goals of environmental stewardship.

A. The University of Texas System Policy

It is the expectation of the University of Texas System that all wastes generated as a result of University activities (including but not limited to infectious medical, hazardous and radioactive wastes) be managed in a manner that will maximize protection of human health and the environment and that all lands held or managed by the System including trust lands and Permanent University Fund Lands, be managed in a manner that will results in proper use of natural resources and the preservation of the natural environment for the benefit of the citizens of Texas.

Accordingly, all employees of UT Health San Antonio shall perform their duties in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local environmental laws, regulations, and ordinances. UT Health San Antonio requires that its tenants and others using University property or engaging in University activities comply with environmental laws, regulations, and ordinances. Failure to follow the necessary environmental health and

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safety regulations by knowledgeable individuals is considered a major violation and subject to disciplinary actions outlined in the Institutional Handbook of Operating Policies (IHOP), [4.9.3 Progressive Disciplinary Action](#), and [4.9.4 Procedures for Dismissal of Employees](#).

Additionally, UT Health San Antonio is committed to appropriate training of all employees and students to perform their duties and conduct their activities in an environmentally responsible manner. To this end, the Environmental Health and Safety department supports development of an environmental training program for employees and students.

Further, UT Health San Antonio will make reasonable efforts to minimize waste generated as a result of University activities and to achieve the goals set out in [Governor's Executive Order AWR 92-2](#).

B. Environmental Preferable Purchasing (EPP) Policy

UT Health San Antonio strives to meet healthcare, education and patient care missions in an environmentally responsible and ethical manner.

The purpose of this policy is to support the purchase of recycled and environmentally preferred products in order to minimize environmental impacts relating to the UT Health San Antonio's role in research and medical education. UT Health San Antonio recognizes that faculty, staff and students all make a difference in the attainment of environmental quality. UT Health San Antonio will encourage the purchase and use of environmentally preferable products whenever they perform satisfactorily, improve patient health outcomes, enhance employee safety, and remain financially reasonable.

UT Health San Antonio will make reasonable effort to minimize waste generated as a result of all activities going to landfills by promoting the use of recycled/recyclable supplies and materials whenever possible. In so doing, UT Health San Antonio will:

1. Reduce energy use or utilize sustainable or renewable energy.
2. Reduce water use or reduce creation of contaminated or polluted water.
3. Support healthy food systems by sourcing local, seasonal nutritious and sustainably produced food.
4. Use green chemicals (chemicals that are inherently less hazardous) and which release little to no toxic by-products across their lifecycle.
5. Encourage waste prevention, recycling, market development and use of recycled/reusable materials through lease agreements, contractual relationships and purchasing practices with suppliers, contractors, businesses, and governmental agencies.
6. Adopt pollution prevention, recycling and use of recycled supplies/materials.
7. Reduce waste material by reviewing how supplies, materials and equipment are made, purchased, packaged, delivered, used, and disposed.

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8. Become an exemplary model for South Texas and our students to positively influence waste prevention, recycling and best purchasing practices.

C. Procurement Practices

In concert with the requirements of research and the treatment of patients, all UT Health San Antonio faculty and staff shall evaluate the following environmentally preferable product categories and purchase these items whenever practical:

1. Printing and writing papers, including all imprinted letterhead paper, envelopes, copy paper and business cards. When practical, these shall contain post-consumer recycled materials.
2. Paper products, including janitorial supplies, shop towels, hand towels, facial tissue, toilet paper, seat covers, corrugated boxes, file boxes, hanging file folders and other products composed largely of recycled paper.
3. Recycled content construction, building and maintenance products, carpe, tiles and insulation.
4. Remanufactured laser printer toner cartridges and remanufactured or refillable ink-jet cartridges.
5. Re-refined lubricating and hydraulic oils.
6. Other products that may be designated by UT Health San Antonio's Purchasing Office.
7. When selecting among products UT Health San Antonio will prefer products that address our environmental priorities listed in the EPP section in addition to meeting our performance and cost goals. EPP principles may not be the sole factor in determining product selection but will be weighed with other quality, service and total cost components.

D. Waste Prevention Practices

1. UT Health San Antonio faculty and staff are encouraged to reduce their consumption of resources by incorporating the following practices:
 - a. Consider durability and repairability of products prior to purchase.
 - b. Conduct routine maintenance on products and equipment to increase useful life.
 - c. Use duplex features on laser printers and copiers.
 - d. Review records retention policies and implement document imaging systems.
 - e. Other waste prevention practices that further the goals of this policy.
2. UT Health San Antonio departments are responsible for:
 - a. Practicing waste prevention whenever possible.
 - b. Continuing to use recycling programs and expand them whenever possible.
 - c. Procuring recycled products whenever possible.

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- d. Developing, evaluating and maintaining information about environmentally preferable and/or recycled products containing the maximum practical amount of recycled materials.
 - e. Educating and promoting this policy through appropriate channels.
3. The Purchasing Office will:
- a. Include supplier's environmentally friendly policies and products as an evaluation criterion to sourcing events where applicable.
 - b. Guide requesting departments to supplier website information about recycled products and environmental procurement opportunities when such information is available.
 - c. Inform suppliers of UT Health San Antonio's Environmental Purchasing Policy.
 - d. Encourage development of specifications used in public bidding aimed at eliminating barriers to recycled-content products. All requests for proposals shall encourage suppliers to offer recycled products whenever practical.

E. Health and Safety Committee

The University of Texas System expects each component institution to establish and maintain a health and safety committee and such other appropriate committees and subcommittees to address and monitor compliance with all applicable environmental, health and safety guidelines, standards, laws, regulations, ordinances, and permit or license requirements.

F. Environmental Health and Safety Advisory Committee

The University of Texas System Office of Business Affairs, in cooperation with component institutions and other University of Texas System offices, shall be responsible for developing and implementing appropriate programs in furtherance of this Environmental Policy Statement. Each component institution shall be represented on the Environmental Health and Safety Advisory Committee which shall provide advice and recommendation in the implementation of this policy.

V. Definitions

When used in this document, the following words have the meaning set forth below unless a different meaning is required by context.

Environmentally Preferred Products - those products that have lesser impact on human health and the environment when compared with competing products. The comparison may consider raw materials, production, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, reuse, operation and or disposal of products.

Pollution Prevention - those actions taken by an individual or organization to eliminate or reduce the amount or toxicity of materials before they enter the municipal solid waste stream. This action is intended to conserve resources, promote efficiency, and reduce pollution.

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Practical – sufficient in performance and available at a reasonable competitive cost.

Recycled Products – those items manufactured with waste materials that have been recovered or diverted from the waste stream. Materials may be derived from post-consumer waste, industrial scrap, manufacturing waste and any other by-product that otherwise would not have been utilized.

Recycling – encompasses the process of collecting, sorting, cleansing, treating and reconstituting materials that would otherwise become solid waste, and returning these items to the economic mainstream in the form of raw material for new, reused, or reconstituted products which meet the quality standards necessary to be used in the marketplace.

VI. Related References

University of Texas System (UTS)

[UTS 169 Sustainability Practices](#)

[UTS 174 Environmental Health and Safety](#)

VII. Review and Approval History

The approving authority of this policy is the University Executive Committee.

Effective Date	Action Taken	Approved By	Approved Date
06/2000	Policy Origination		
09/2009	Policy Revision		
12/2020	Policy Revision/Discretionary Edit	ICPO	12/14/2021
12/2024	Policy Review		