

Environmentally Speaking



ENVIRONMENTALLY SPEAKING!

A Time for Reflection

The events of September 11, 2001, have caused a great many people to pause and reflect upon their values and to reassess, to varying degrees, the priorities in their lives. There seems to be a greater appreciation of some of the things in life that too often tend to be taken for granted.

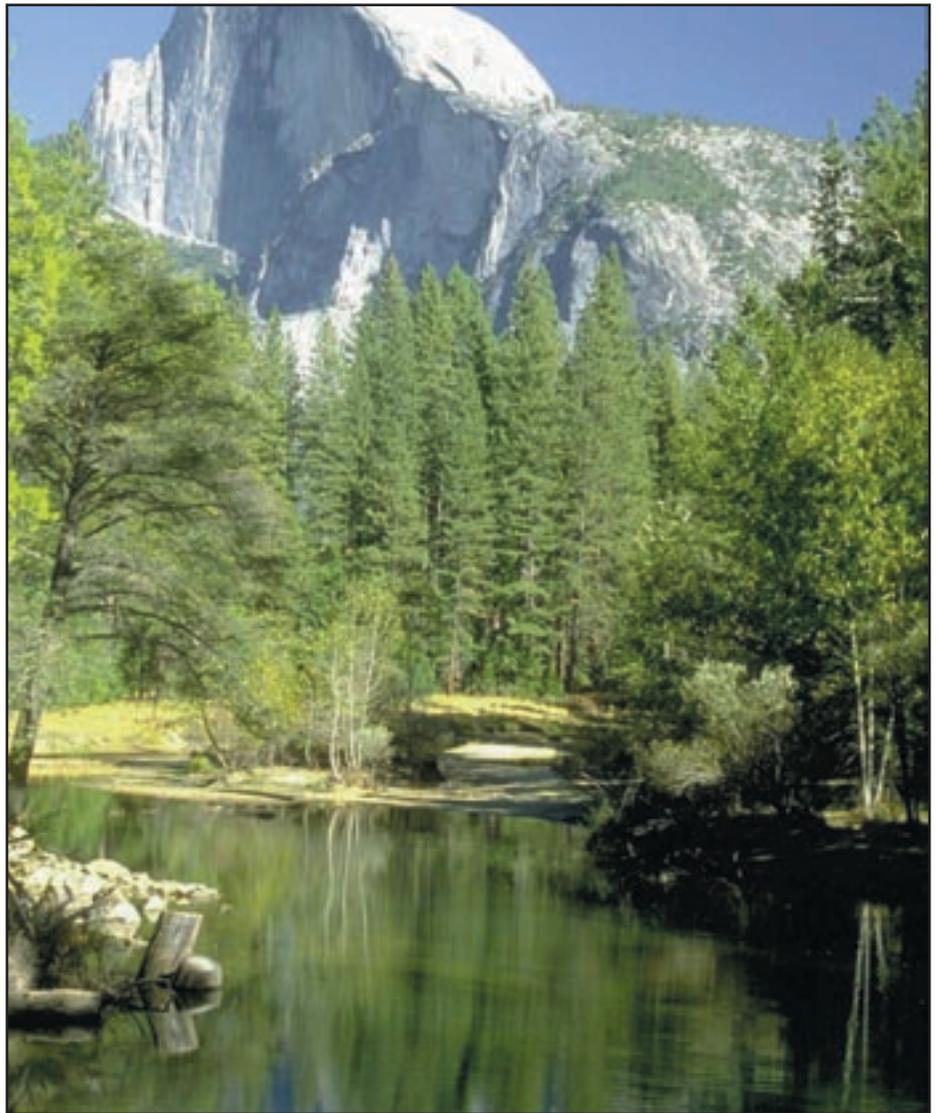
Is this not, then, also a good time to reflect upon our environment and to renew our commitment to do all that we can to help restore and preserve the natural treasures with which we are so blessed, as a Nation?!

We can do this individually, as co-inhabitants of the earth, and/or collectively, as representatives of the Federal Government in a very visible position and with a very real opportunity to set the example for others!

Historical Summary

There are any number of problems affecting our environment, many of which date back to the American Revolution. The increased industrial production that was necessary to meet the challenges of the economic and population growth of our country has had a negative impact on public health and our supply of natural resources. We have to take responsibility for the resultant degradation of our air and water, the rapid consumption of our natural resources – such as crude oil – and the generation of ever increasing amounts of solid waste being dumped into our landfills.

Over the years, there have been attempts by environmentalists and lawmakers to raise awareness of these problems and to



take measures to minimize the impacts described above. Major environmental legislation eventually was enacted to begin to mitigate the ill effects of industrial growth. Among the more notable laws that have been passed are the: Waste Disposal Act, Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), Clean Air and Water Acts, and National Energy Conservation Policy Act.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also was created by Congress to deal with the environmental problems

mentioned above, and a number of Executive orders have been issued to provide specific guidance and direction to Federal agencies.

GSA Involvement

The purpose of GSA's establishment was to centralize the management of the Federal Government's real and personal property. This management authority includes the construction and operation of buildings, procurement and

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distribution of supplies, utilization and disposal of real and personal property, the procurement of computers and telecommunications equipment, and a wide variety of services.

The nature of the mission of GSA, therefore, places the agency in a pivotal role in the implementation of environmental policy. From an environmental management perspective, GSA's Public Buildings Service (PBS) presents opportunities to demonstrate solid waste minimization, pollution prevention, and energy conservation practices in more than 1,100 Federal buildings and facilities that it manages. From a procurement perspective, the aggregate buying power of GSA's Federal Supply Service (FSS), to satisfy government wide demand, is perceived as a major potential factor in the eventual development, acceptance, and common use of environmental products and services in the private sector, as well.

A few years ago, GSA announced a concept called *Planet GSA*, which encompassed a number of key areas in which GSA can play a significant environmental role. The idea behind the concept was to recognize and capitalize on those areas where GSA was already making significant contributions of an environmental nature. In educating its own workforce about the environmental problems and what GSA was doing to help address them, GSA's intent was to simultaneously provide example and guidance to other Federal agencies and to encourage them to work with GSA to safeguard the environment for future generations.

Focus on FSS

Given the nature of the MarkeTips publication, and the functions and interests of the majority of its readers, the balance of this article will focus on the environmental products and services that the FSS, albeit a non-mandatory source, makes available to the Federal community.

Recycled Products and Recycling

To help in the area of minimizing waste going into land-fills, FSS makes a wide variety of products available in its supply system that are made with recycled content, including those items designated by EPA, as referenced in Executive Order 13101. These items are known as the Comprehensive Procurement Guideline or CPG items, and are required to be purchased with specific minimum amounts of recovered material recycled content.

As indicated above, one of the environmental initiatives, *plainly speaking*, is to *reduce the amount of stuff going into landfills*. The order of sequence for actions in this regard is: reduce, reuse, and recycle. As more stuff is reused, there is less of it to dispose of. *If the material can be 'recycled' into other products, that also keeps it out of the landfill.*

Of course, the catch here is, *if there is no demand /market for the products with recycled content, there is no point in collecting the materials*. Recycled content products also very often contribute in other ways to helping the environmental situation. One example is that the energy used to manufacture products with recycled content in most, if not all, cases is less than that required to manufacture virgin products.



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There are a number of financial considerations associated with the recycling/recycled products concept, as well. Disposal fees (*charges to dump stuff into landfills*) are avoided, for one example (over \$3.8 million FY00). Another is the opportunity to make money (over \$900,000 FY00) by selling the collected materials (over 43,400 tons FY 00). However, as mentioned above, this depends on fluctuating market conditions, which are largely influenced by the demand for the collected materials to be used in recycled content products. Recycled content products, for the most part, are cost effective compared to virgin products, and there is the consideration of the overall impact on the economy as reflected in the jobs created by the recycled content product industry.

The greater acceptance and use of recycled content products is sometimes hampered by concerns of quality. In the vast majority of cases, these concerns are unfounded, and, in some, they may be the result of an earlier unsatisfactory experience with a recycled content product which has since been improved. There should be no reason for whole offices or agencies to avoid buying the recycled content products offered in the FSS supply system, especially, those designated by EPA as required.

There is no question of the validity of the concept of using recycled content products. Quality problems are just as much a fact of life with respect to virgin products as they can be with recycled content products. Using steel, which is arguably the most recycled material, as an example, there is no opposition to purchasing autos, appliances, tools, and canned food products, to name a few, because they are made with 'recycled materials'. *The common acceptance of the*

products made with recycled steel is the goal with respect to other products in the marketplace that are made with other recycled materials.

There is a wide range of products that are made with recycled content in the FSS supply system. All items identified and/or designated by EPA, that come under GSA's management (re-refined oil, for one example, is managed by the Defense Logistics Agency of the Department of Defense), are included, as well as many other items that are not required. Paper Products is the largest recycled content commodity grouping (over 1,000 items) with such products as copier paper and numerous other office supplies included. Non-paper Office Products includes such items as binders, desk-top accessories, waste and recycling containers, and 'remanufactured'

toner cartridges, to name a few. Other commodity groupings include Construction Products, such as insulation, fiberboard, carpeting, and latex paint; Landscaping Products; Park and Recreation Products; Transportation Products; and Vehicular Products.

Natural Resource Conservation and Pollution Prevention

Because of the close working relationship with EPA and DOE, and its cooperative interaction with industry, FSS is able to make a variety of *energy and/or water savings products* available in its supply system, as well as a whole host of *paints, cleaning products, and other chemically related items that are less detrimental to the environment.*



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The items associated with resource conservation range from relatively simple products, such as *low flow showerheads*, to somewhat more complex items, such as *Energy Star computers, printers and other office equipment (over 2,000 such items), as well as energy efficient household appliances.*

The Vehicle Acquisition Program of FSS has purchased approximately 54,000 Alternative Fuel Vehicles (AFV's) for customer agencies. These vehicles can run on ethanol, methanol, natural gas, or electricity. Not only do these vehicles help conserve natural resources; they also pollute less than conventional gasoline engines.

Environmental Services

The Environmental Services Schedule 899 provides Federal agencies access to the full range of contract support for:

- **Planning and Documentation** – for such things as environmental impact statements and site assessments;
- **Compliance** – for such things as audits, management planning and pollution prevention surveys;
- **Environmental/Occupational Training** – conventional and customized courses, including software based interactive training;
- **Waste Management** – for such things as hazard and exposure assessments, characterization studies, tracking or handling systems, planning, review of technologies and processes, and the management and operation of recycling programs;

- **Hazardous Materials Management Advisory** – Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) by compact disc, on-line via Internet, mail or facsimile (FAX); report, compliance, and tracking software, and other related software/services;
- **Remote Advisory** – off-site advisory services via Internet, FAX back, and telephone for hazardous spills, poisons, MSDSs, and other related services;
- **Geographic Information Systems (GIS)** – for complex environmental planning and management problems. Includes Mapping and Cartography, Natural Resource Planning, Migration Pattern Analysis, Pollution Analysis, Site Selection, and Emergency Preparedness Planning;
- **Remediation** – Full range of services to clean up hazardous materials or a contaminated site including: evacuation, removal, manifesting, transportation, storage, treatment and/or disposal of hazardous materials; preparation characterization, field investigation, conservation and closure of site; containment monitoring and/or reduction of hazardous waste sites; ordinance removal or support; long term monitoring and support.

Environmental Item Identification

- **GSA Supply Catalog**
An early example of FSS's attempt to communicate the extra effort being made in the environmental arena was the *highlighting of*

applicable products in the GSA Supply Catalog that had environmental attributes, e.g., recycled content. This was accomplished by printing the stock numbers (nsn's) and the specific environmental information related to the items in *green*, so they stood out from the other items.

- **Environmental Products and Services Guide (EPSG)**
For several years, FSS has produced a consolidated publication of environmental items. Initially called the Recycled Products Guide, it contained all the items supplied by FSS that contained recycled content. Within a couple of years, the scope of the publication was broadened to include products and services that related to energy and water conservation, and that addressed pollution prevention concerns, and it was retitled the Environmental Products Guide.

The scope also was broadened in the sense that the sources reported were expanded to include items available from the Federal Supply Schedules, as well as from the original Stock and Special Order Programs. To better recognize and draw attention to the increased coverage of the many environmental services under contract to FSS and available to the Federal agencies, the title was changed to its current form.

Another development was the *discontinuance of the hard copy distribution*, in demonstration of the commitment and environmental leadership of FSS. A limited number of hard copies, however, are

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made available for those customers who have a need for them, based upon their inability to access the publication on the FSS environmental web site (*more on the web site below*).

All current addressees receive a postcard notice each time a new edition is available. Directions also are provided to assist those customers who need a hard copy.

- **GSA Advantage!™**

There have been some major efforts in recent years along the lines of developing and encouraging the development and implementation of a full-cycle electronic acquisition process. FSS has been in the forefront of this initiative and has been having great success with its *on-line shopping system GSA Advantage!™* Environmental considerations were included in the design of this program by the use of special symbols. A feature called *'Advanced Search'* enables customers to key in on environmental items, as well as some other special consideration items, such as *NIB/NISH and UNICOR* items, to name a few.

Electronic commerce certainly saves time, not to mention a significant amount of paper. The ever increasing use of the internet also poses an excellent opportunity to save even more paper.

- **Environmental Programs Web Site – fss.gsa.gov/enviro**

In keeping with the internet trend, FSS developed a web site expressly for its Environmental Programs that contains a wealth of environ-

mentally oriented information.

The primary information relative to products and services is categorized as follows:

Alternative Fuel Vehicles (AFVs)
Comprehensive Procurement Guideline (CPG) Compliant and Other Recycled Products
Energy Star and Other Energy-Efficient Products
Environmental Services
Re-utilization of Personal Property (Excess and Sales Programs)
Safer Paints, Cleaning and Other Chemical Products
Other 'Environmental' Products and Services

By clicking on a product name, customers can move from the Environmental Programs web site to either the FSS Schedules E-Library web site (fss.gsa.gov/elibrary) or the GSA Advantage! web site (www.gsaAdvantage.gov) to get vendor/product information and make a purchase. Efforts are underway to further improve these transitions.

In addition, the web site contains applicable laws and Executive orders and relevant cites in regulations, such as the Federal Acquisition Regulations, as well as links to other agency sites and information on various environmental organizations.

Things To Do At Work and At Home

Hopefully, the information in this article has been useful in providing some insight into the environmental issues facing us today, and in pointing out how FSS has been active in helping to address these

concerns by making environmental products and services available to the Federal community to enable Federal agencies to comply with the various environmental regulatory requirements.

Listed below are a some general actions that individuals can take, at home and at the office, to help the environment:

- Turn off lights in rooms not being used
- Turn off idle appliances and office equipment – especially, *computers* at the end of the day
- Use electronic commerce and e-mail as much as possible
- Use electronic files in lieu of printing out e-mail
- Make the least amount of copies needed
- DOUBLE-SIDE all copying
- Use the copy room for large or involved copying jobs
- Establish copy room policy of double-siding all jobs
- Before 'recycling' paper that only has printing on one side, use the clear side for scratch purposes
- Participate in recycling programs
- Buy and use products with recycled content
- Use a ceramic mug versus paper or Styrofoam cups
- Use car/van pools, and/or mass transit
- Walk up 1, down 2 flights of stairs
- Use tele- and video-conferencing in lieu of travel
- Lower your hot water heater at home to 115 degrees
- Buy a programmable thermostat with automatic setbacks
- Use compact fluorescent Torchiere lamps

ENERGY-EFFICIENT PURCHASING IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Each year, the Federal Government spends an estimated \$10-20 billion to purchase energy related products. This equipment is responsible for an estimated \$3.5 billion in annual energy bills for Federal facilities.

In 1992, the Congress passed major legislation, the Energy Policy Act (EPACT), which provides Federal agencies with a comprehensive approach to reducing energy consumption and costs. The EPACT addresses an array of energy issues that have had a significant impact on the gas, electric, and coal industries. The EPACT implemented energy efficiency standards for buildings and industrial and residential products. The EPACT encourages an increased use of renewable energy sources, alternative fuels, alternative fuel vehicles, and electric vehicles, in addition to developing the infrastructure and support systems. The

EPACT also became the catalyst for the passage of several Federal regulations on energy-efficient product purchasing.

A few years after the enactment of the EPACT, Congress amended the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), Subpart 23.2 – Energy Conservation, and Subpart 23.7 – Contracting for Environmentally Preferable and Energy-Efficient Products and Services, to broaden its definition of an energy-efficient product and to include requirements for energy services (Subpart 23.7). FAR Subpart 23.703 states that agencies must "implement cost-effective contracting preference programs favoring the acquisition of environmentally preferable and energy-efficient products and services."

The White House has issued several Executive orders on energy-efficient product purchasing since the passage of

the EPACT. In June 1999, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13123, Greening the Government through Efficient Energy Management, which revoked a previous Executive order that he signed in 1994 (Executive Order 12902—Energy Efficiency and Water Conservation at Federal Facilities). Executive Order 13123 requires agencies to purchase Energy Star® products, or energy-efficient products not covered by the Energy Star® program that are in the upper 25% of energy efficiency as designated by the Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP). More recently, President Bush signed Executive Order 13321, Energy Efficient Standby Power Devices, in July 2001. Executive Order 13321 calls for Federal agencies to purchase products that use minimal standby power when they are commercially available.



TWO SIMPLE WAYS TO IDENTIFY AND PURCHASE ENERGY-EFFICIENT PRODUCTS

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Energy (DOE) have developed two simple ways to help Federal buyers identify energy-efficient products. The first is the Energy Star® program, and the second is the FEMP Efficiency Product Recommendations.

The Energy Star® program is the easiest way to help buyers identify energy-efficient products. EPA and DOE have partnered to promote the specification and procurement of energy-efficient products. To make energy-efficient products easily identifiable, EPA and DOE award the Energy Star® label to manufacturers for each energy consuming product that meets EPA/DOE efficiency specifications. Manufacturers are encouraged to market Energy Star® products to buyers by placing the Energy Star® label on each compliant product. The established efficiency specifications are the result of negotiated talks between EPA, DOE, manufacturers, and retailers. These specifications also represent the top tier of the market for energy efficiency. To make certain that the label consistently represents the most efficient products available in the market, the specifications are periodically reviewed.

While manufacturers certify their products as Energy Star® compliant by using standard industry test methods, EPA and DOE reserve the right to randomly test products and take appropriate actions if they detect non-compliance. Manufacturers agree to use the Energy Star® label correctly in identifying their products.

To receive more information on the Energy Star® program, you can either visit the Energy Star® web site at www.energystar.gov or call the Energy Star® hotline at 1-888-ENERGYSTAR.

The second way for buyers to identify energy-efficient products is to follow the FEMP Product Energy Efficiency Recommendations. FEMP distributes its efficiency recommendations to Federal procurement officials, product specifiers, and facility and energy managers to provide them with important information on how to purchase energy-efficient products. The recommendations, typically two pages long, help Federal buyers determine which products qualify among the top 25% of efficiency and identify the Federal supply sources that offer these products, including GSA. Buyers will also find a cost-effectiveness

example to help them compare annual and life-cycle energy cost savings with the added cost of an efficient product. FEMP has published a total of 40 recommendations for energy-efficient commercial and residential products. The product types covered by the FEMP recommendations exclude those that fall under the Energy Star® program. The FEMP Product Efficiency Recommendations are available to you on the Internet at

www.eren.doe.gov/femp/procurement.

As an added benefit to you, FEMP also has posted interactive cost calculator tools on this web site to allow purchasers to calculate and compare lifetime energy costs. You can obtain a printed loose-leaf binder that contains the FEMP efficiency recommendations, titled Buying Energy-Efficient Products, by calling 1-800-DOE-EREC.

To find out the latest information concerning the implementation of Executive Order 13321, Energy Efficient Standby Power Devices, visit the FEMP web site at

http://www.eren.doe.gov/femp/resources/standby_power.

MAKE GSA YOUR FIRST STOP TO LOCATE AND PURCHASE ENERGY STAR® PRODUCTS AND OTHER ENERGY EFFICIENT ITEMS!

GSA has partnered with EPA and DOE to offer Federal buyers a variety of Energy Star® products and other energy-efficient products. We offer the energy-efficient products listed below. The product names that have an asterisk (*) next to them indicate that we have Energy Star® compliant products available for purchase. We recommend that customers specifically request schedule vendors to identify Energy Star® compliant products and/or other

energy-efficient products that they offer to Federal buyers under contract. You can view a list of schedule vendors for any of the products below by visiting our Schedules E-Library web site at fss.gsa.gov/elibrary. GSA plans to add energy-efficient standby power devices in support of Executive Order 13321 implementation efforts, when they are commercially available.

Commercial Appliances	Home Audio Equipment*	Clothes Washers*
Ice Making Machines (Schedule 73 III)	Televisions*	Dishwashers*
Commercial Equipment	TV/VCR Combination Units*	Refrigerators*
Water-Cooled Chillers (BOA)	VCRs*	Room Air Conditioners*
Commercial/Industrial Technologies	Lighting Technologies	Residential Equipment (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 56)
Low Voltage Transformers* (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 61)	Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs* (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 62)	Electric Water Heaters*
Medium Voltage Transformers (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 61)	Compact Fluorescent Torchieres (Schedule 72 II)	Gas Water Heaters*
Construction Products	Exit Signs* (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 99)	Solar Technologies
Residential Windows* (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 56)	Fluorescent Ballasts (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 62)	Pre-packaged PV Systems (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 62)
Roof Products* (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 56)	Fluorescent Luminaries (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 62)	Solar Outdoor Lighting (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 62)
Distribution Systems (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 61)	Fluorescent Tube Lamps (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 62)	Solar Pool Controls (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 62)
Power Distribution Equipment & Power Support Engineering Support	Lighting Technologies (cont'd)	Solar Water Pump (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 62)
Energy Management Services (Schedule 871 II)	Industrial HID Luminaries (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 62)	Solar Water Heater (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 62)
Energy Audit Services	Lighting Sensor Systems (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 62)	Solar Window Film (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 56)
Energy Management Program Support	Residential Lighting Fixtures* (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 62)	Water Saving Technologies
Managing the Procurement and Use of Electricity	Office Equipment Technologies	Faucets (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 56)
Managing the Procurement and Use of Natural Gas	Computers* (Schedule 70)	Showerheads (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 56)
Facility Management Systems (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 63)	Copiers* (Schedule 36)	Toilets (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 56)
Systems Capable of Both Security and Energy Management Functions	Fax Machines* (Schedule 70)	Urinals (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 56)
Systems Capable of Energy Management Functions	Monitors* (Schedule 70)	Miscellaneous
Home Electronics (Schedule 539-Federal Supply Class 77)	Multifunctional Devices* (Schedule 70)	Window Shades (Schedule 72 II)
DVD Players*	Printers* (Schedule 70)	
	Scanners* (Schedule 70)	
	Residential Appliances (Schedule 41 I)	

FSS IMPLEMENTS AFFIRMATIVE PROCUREMENT PLAN (APP) FOR CENTRAL OFFICE ASSOCIATES

In July 2001, the Federal Supply Service (FSS) Central Office released its Affirmative Procurement Plan (APP). The APP directs all Central Office associates to purchase Comprehensive Procurement Guideline (CPG) compliant products when they are commercially available. CPG compliant products are products that meet or exceed the Environmental Protection Agency designated recycled-content range. There are 5 key components to the APP: a preference plan; a promotional plan; procedures for estimation, certification, and verification; procedures for annual review and reporting; and, coordination responsibilities. The APP also requires FSS Central Office associates to purchase bio-based products when the United States Department of Agriculture publishes a product list for Federal buyers.

FSS has made it easier for FSS associates and other Federal buyers to locate CPG compliant products, as well as a variety of other environmental products and services, in its supply offerings. The very popular Environmental Products and Services Guide (EPSG) is an excellent source for locating CPG compliant products that are offered by FSS. The EPSG contains over 1100 CPG compliant products. The vast majority of these products are frequently used office supplies; such as copier paper and binders. Each CPG compliant product has a CPG designated icon symbol to distinguish it from the other environmental products and services listed in the EPSG.

The FSS Environmental Programs web site (fss.gsa.gov/enviro) is another excellent source for locating CPG compliant products in the FSS supply system. This web site contains extensive information about the CPG compliant

products offered by GSA, in addition to the laws, Executive orders, and regulations affecting Federal purchasing of environmental products and services. When you visit this web site, you will find electronic versions of the current EPSG—located in the Publications section—and the APP—located on the CPG and Other Recycled Products offering page. In addition, you will be able to visit either the Schedules E-Library web site (fss.gsa.gov/elibrary), to view the list of vendors that we currently have on Schedule, or visit the GSA Advantage[™] web site (www.gsaAdvantage.gov) to purchase CPG compliant products and other environmental products by clicking on the product name of your choosing.

And, the GSA Advantage[™] on-line purchasing system is another excellent source for locating CPG compliant items. There is a designated CPG icon symbol that appears next to those products that are CPG compliant. This symbol is one of 14 environmental symbols used in GSA Advantage[™]. With a click of the mouse, you can purchase the CPG compliant product and other environmental products of your choice.

Remember, GSA can assist you in meeting your environmental purchasing requirements. Think green and buy green products and services from GSA!

