Happy Holidays from all at OSD!

Governor Patrick Issues EPP Purchasing Policy!

A momentous announcement was made very appropriately at the luncheon session of the EPP Vendor Fair on October 27, 2009 – Governor Patrick had just signed Executive Order #515 directing all state agencies to procure goods and services that conserve natural resources, reduce waste, protect public health and the environment, and promote the use of clean technologies, recycled materials, and less toxic products. By purchasing EPPs Commonwealth agencies will reduce the environmental impact of state operations and use the state’s purchasing power to encourage manufacturers and service providers to adopt high environmental standards into their products and operations.

“The Commonwealth has an obligation to lead by example,” said Governor Patrick in a recent press release. “We are already leading on energy conservation and renewable energy. Now, our state agencies will set the pace for buying environmentally sound products and services from suppliers and vendors.” In addition to reducing the environmental and health-related impacts of the Commonwealth’s consumption of these products, this policy will lower life-cycle costs, promote local economic development of these industries, and serve as a model for businesses, institutions, and individual residents.

“At a time when all governments are committed to operate as efficiently as possible, cooperating on procurements such as this makes dollars and sense,” said Administration and Finance Secretary Jay Gonzalez. “Aggregating the purchasing power within a multi-state region enables state governments to promote purchases on a broader scale that represent a lesser impact to the environment and public health while obtaining the best value and pricing for all involved.”

(To see the full text of the EO, visit http://www.mass.gov/Agov3/docs/Executive%20Orders/executive_order_515.pdf).

EPP Buyer Update
Volume 34, November/December 2009

EPP Vendor Fair 15th Anniversary Highlights

Showcasing a record number of 175 exhibitors of environmentally preferable, cost-saving products and services, the EPP Vendor Fair and Conference celebrated its 15th year this October 27, at the DCU Center in Worcester. The event registered over 1100 attendees from Massachusetts and surrounding the New England states, as well as representatives from several states across the country. There were 10 educational workshops focused on energy efficiency, Green Communities, green cleaning, municipal programs for recycling paint and much more, as well as close to 20 unique try-before-you-buy pilot product and service trials!

“This event always offers something new,” one attendee from the north shore commented. “The Vendor Innovative Technologies” workshop was great.” In fact, there were actually 66 new vendors to the show this year – the greatest percentage increase in all prior shows. “The recognition that green products perform equal to others and often have the potential to save significant dollars over the life of the product, has a lot to do with the growth in the number of companies offering these goods,” states the shows coordinator Marcia Deegler. “As competition increases, the quality gets better and the costs go down; it’s a winning opportunity that we try to underscore for Commonwealth buyers at the show.”

(continued on next page)
Making Your List and Checking it Twice!

As many of you rush around to do your last minute shopping, we would like to offer a couple of easy tips to help green your gifts and keep them healthy! That’s right, healthy. Unfortunately, many items for the home and even some of the most popular children’s toys of the 2009 holiday season harbor toxins and have unforeseen environmental and health impacts. How can learn which toys may be involved without driving yourself crazy? Read on…

There are currently no restrictions on the various plastics used in everyday products marketed to children. Unfortunately, these plastics contain harmful chemicals and may also contain phthalate, a potentially toxic additive to make plastic flexible and durable.

For a guide to safer plastics as well as other helpful links, see: http://www.iatp.org/foodandhealth/. Below is a shopping quick reference showing which plastics to avoid, and which to consider.

Choosing toys and products made from natural materials such as unpainted wood, fabric, and plant-based goods is that most guaranteed way to avoid unnecessary hazards. But who has time to search those out? Here are a few helpful websites that contain info on simplifying holiday buying practices, creating an alternative gift registry and places to find toys without the toxics!

- The Center for a New American Dream targets both commodities and e-conscious concepts: http://www.newdream.org/holiday/index.php
- Green Toys, Inc. – many toys made with recycled plastic and 3rd party certified for safety: http://www.greentoys.com/green.html

(Disclaimer: The EPP Program does endorse the products on the various sites above; we simply offer the sites as alternative considerations to more toxic items available on the market).

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) makes a list of all toy recalls available at www.cpsc.gov. We encourage shoppers to read this list and to check it twice. Happy Holidays!

Vendor Fair Highlights (continued)

Also, at the event the winners of the Leading by Example Environmental Innovation Awards were recognized for their leadership in promoting sustainable purchasing and various conservation measures. The winners included the Department of Environmental Protection, Mass Trail Court, Mass Maritime Academy, Salem State College, City of Somerville and the Towns of Dedham and Plymouth. For further details on these awards, readers should visit www.mass.gov/envir/Sustainable and search under 2009 LBE awards.

New Contracts Ring in the New Year!

FAC58: Water Treatment makes “Water Sense”

Across the country, our growing population is putting stress on available water supplies. According to the EPA, a recent government survey showed at least 36 states are anticipating local, regional, or statewide water shortages by 2013. By reducing facility and household water consumption you can reduce electricity required to supply and to treat water supplies as well as help to combat climate change.

In response, this fall OSD re-bid statewide contract, FAC58, for plumbing and heating supplies. Buyers now have four categories of products that offer water saving and money saving opportunities; from waterless urinals, to low flow plumbing devices, to energy efficient heating and HVAC systems and more.

Buyers should pay particular attention to products that carry the WaterSense logo as they are usually 20% more efficient than other items. See info on both contracts at www.comm-pass.com.