



**Department of Energy**  
Washington, DC 20585  
February 5, 1997

RCRA Information Center (5305W)  
Environmental Protection Agency  
401 M St., S.W.  
Washington D.C. 20460

**Docket Number F-96-CP2P-FFFFF**

Dear Sir or Madam:

*Re: 61 FR 57748, "Comprehensive Guideline for Procurement of Products Containing Recovered Material -- Proposed Amendment"*

On November 7, 1996, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) published for review and comment a proposed amendment to the May 1, 1995, Comprehensive Procurement Guideline. As indicated in the proposed rule, comments are to be submitted to EPA on or before February 5, 1997.

The Comprehensive Procurement Guideline implements Section 6002(e) of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) which requires EPA to designate items that are or can be made with recovered materials and to recommend practices to assist a procuring Federal agency in meeting its obligations with respect to designated items under RCRA Section 6002. EPA is designating 13 new items that are or can be made with recovered materials: shower and restroom dividers; latex paint; parking stops; channelizers; delineators; flexible delineators; snow fencing; garden and soaker hoses; lawn and garden edging; printer ribbons; ink jet cartridges; plastic envelopes; and pallets.

The Department of Energy (DOE) appreciates the opportunity to comment and provide input in response to this notice. The Department fully supports efforts to conserve resources by procuring products containing recovered material and have aggressively instituted an Affirmative Procurement Program throughout the complex. However, DOE is concerned that, as the number of designated items increases, the administrative costs of this program will become increasingly expensive. The enclosed comments, which include viewpoints and issues identified by DOE Field Sites and Program Offices, address this concern and are introduced for EPA's consideration.

Sincerely,

Raymond F. Pelletier  
Director  
Office of Environmental Policy and Assistance

Enclosure

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY  
COMMENTS ON EPA'S COMPREHENSIVE GUIDELINE FOR PROCUREMENT  
ADVISORY NOTICE (61 FR 57748; November 7, 1996)**

- 1. The Department of Energy (DOE) is concerned that the number of designated items, particularly as it continues to grow, will place a substantial administrative burden on DOE sites. DOE believes that the centralized approach required to track these purchases goes against current efforts to de-centralize procurement, empower employees, and reduce the administrative burden of procurement.**

The proposed amendment would add 13 new items to the Comprehensive Procurement Guideline. This will bring the total number of EPA-designated items to 37. To date, DOE has collected data on 5 items, with 19 additional items to be tracked this year. Given the difficulties DOE has encountered in collecting reliable data on just 5 items, the tracking and reporting of 37 items will be a significant challenge, even though many of the proposed items are not purchased in quantity by DOE. DOE is concerned that the additional burdens of tracking affirmative procurement information and establishing the infrastructure to institute policies and procedures may be difficult at a time when administrative and support staff are being cut across the federal government. Many current procurement practices such as the proliferation of credit card purchasing make it very difficult to centrally track a procurement through the organization. Credit card procurement was specifically developed to give federal employees some relief from the substantial administrative burdens of the traditional procurement approach. DOE requests that EPA assist in developing methodologies or system infrastructures to handle the increased administrative burden of tracking the procurement of the 37 designated items.

In addition to tracking the procurement of designated items, Federal agencies must also report on their status in procuring products with recovered content. The current form of the Federal report is extremely detailed. The Office of Federal Procurement Policy and the Office of the Federal Environmental Executive are convening an interagency task force to address the streamlining of RCRA reporting. As a way to reduce the administrative burden as the number of designated items increases, the Department requests that this task force consider the impacts of reporting on these newly designated items.