

NIDCD Green Policy

A. Purpose

This document establishes and describes NIDCD's policies and procedures for conducting operations and activities in an environmentally responsible and sustainable manner. It will serve as the point of reference from which all procedures will be derived. It is expected and intended that the NIDCD Green Policy will evolve with changes in NIH guidance and as the NIDCD develops and incorporates better ideas and tools for protecting the environment and conserving energy.

B. Background

In 2005, the NIH Director created the Environmental Policy of the National Institutes of Health to officially declare a commitment to the protection of the environment and responsible use of natural resources. As the steward of medical and behavioral research for the Nation, the NIH leads the way in the pursuit of knowledge about living systems and the application of this knowledge to extend healthy life and reduce illness and disability. As proactive keepers of the public health and the environment, the NIH community embraces conservation, pollution prevention, and sustainable development while continually seeking to reduce resource consumption.

The NIH environmental policy establishes the following important commitments:

- Compliance with all federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations, as well as Executive Orders.
- Prevention of pollution by minimizing the generation of wastes where possible, reducing consumption, recycling materials, and disposing of wastes in an environmentally responsible manner.
- Integration of environmental and health considerations into decision-making processes.

All NIH employees are responsible for being aware of the environmental and health impacts of their jobs and for continually striving to minimize these impacts as set forth in this policy.

C. Policy

NIDCD is committed to protecting the public health by conducting our operations and activities in an environmentally responsible and sustainable manner. We are committed to complying with all applicable laws and regulations. We recognize that reducing and, where possible, eliminating the environmental impacts of our activities is an important part of our mission as stewards of the public health. We strive to be a leader among the NIH Institutes and Centers in achieving

environmental excellence. As such, we will work with our employees and other internal and external entities to establish and follow principles, in conjunction with the Environmental Policy of the NIH that will guide NIDCD environmental practices.

The NIDCD guiding principles and practices to achieve resource conservation, waste reduction, and sustainability overall are summarized below:

- Comply with mandatory requirements and conduct our activities and operate our facilities within applicable environmental laws and regulations
- Conserve energy and other natural resources
- Encourage employees to use mass transit or other alternative forms of transportation
- Reduce, reuse, and recycle to reduce waste
- Minimize the production of hazardous waste
- Adopt green procurement practices
- Ensure all employees complete the environmental awareness training
- Continue to review and minimize the impacts of our activities.

D. Responsibilities

a) Energy conservation

Employees shall:

1. Turn off lights when not in use and use natural light when possible.
2. Turn off, not just log off, all computers, terminals, speakers and other office equipment at the end of every work day.
3. Turn off your power strip at the end of every work day.
4. Activate the power down features on your computer and monitor to enter into a low-power or sleep mode when not in use.
5. Unplug equipment that drains energy even when not in use (e.g., cell phone chargers, fans, coffee makers, desktop printers, radios, etc.).
6. Use Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs) in desk lamps as opposed to incandescent lights whenever possible.
7. Use the stairs when possible.
8. Utilize videoconferencing and conference calls as an alternative to travel when possible.

b) Reduction of Materials Consumption

Employees shall:

1. Avoid paper use by distributing and storing documents electronically.

2. Print and photocopy only what you need and double side your jobs when possible.
3. Tell staff and colleagues that you prefer double-sided documents.
4. Use the back side of old documents for faxes, scrap paper, or drafts.

c) Reduce Fossil Fuel Consumption and Air Pollution

Employees shall:

1. Ride mass transit or other alternative forms of transportation, whenever possible.
2. Use carpools or vanpools, when possible, over single use cars.
3. Telework one day a week, if possible.

d) Minimize Waste and Increase Recycling

Employees shall:

1. Use durable reusable beverage containers, plates, and utensils.
2. Reduce the amount of toner in documents that will be printed when possible.
3. Print documents in black and white or grayscale whenever possible.
4. As a requirement, recycle paper, paper products, plastic, binders, folders, catalogs, boxes, bottles, cans, batteries, electronics, toner and ink cartridges.
5. Donate, or find new purposes for, used furniture and electronics through the Property Utilization Branch.

e) Minimize Toxics and Hazardous Waste

Employees shall:

1. Never pour toxic or hazardous substances down the drain.
2. Reduce use of toxic chemicals and use less toxic alternatives wherever possible.
3. Not use or purchase mercury or mercury-containing equipment, unless necessary and approval has been obtained.
4. Design experiments, when possible, to use less toxic or hazardous substances.
5. Purchase chemicals in the smallest quantities needed to avoid over-ordering.
6. Dispose of hazardous chemicals appropriately and in accordance with the NIH Disposal Guide and other legal requirements.

f) Commitment to Green Purchasing

Employees shall:

1. Purchase copier and printer paper that contains 100% post-consumer recycled content
2. Purchase paper products, including writing pads, notebooks, file folders, envelopes, and self-stick notes, that contain at least 30% post-consumer recycled content.
3. Purchase office supplies and furniture that contain the highest percentage of recycled and non-toxic content whenever possible.
4. Purchase products that contain biobased content whenever possible.
5. Purchase Energy Star office equipment.
6. Use the Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) to identify computers and monitors with environmental attributes and purchase computers and monitors with at least a Bronze rating.
7. Purchase quality furniture and electronics that are no longer needed through the Property Utilization Branch.

g) Increasing Awareness of NIDCD's Impact on the Environment and Public Health

All employees are required to complete the NIH Environmental Management System (NEMS) Awareness training course. The course may be found at: <http://lms.learning.hhs.gov>.

