



Purchasing With A Green Conscience

18TH ANNUAL STA FIELD DAY COVERAGE CONTINUED...

Cindy Toth, Director of Environmental Policy with the Town of Oakville, spoke on the whys, hows, options and barriers of purchasing GREEN. It's ironic that in an industry like ours – where literally and figuratively our success is measured by the colour green – we could do so much better on the environmental front.

Cindy stated, "Every product you purchase can have multiple impacts on human health and the environment." The list of why we need to research alternatives is

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long. Saving money is not always on the top, but stimulating the market for innovative new products and services is. Reducing waste, making efficient use of resources, using reusable containers or parts and recycling are all 'no brainers.' But did you know it could be as simple as purchasing a product or service with a 'lesser' or reduced impact than that of a similar product?

Environmental purchasing policies triple your bottom line – socially, environmentally and financially. Traditional bottom line policies do create barriers, not

to mention the higher up-front costs that sometimes come with green purchasing. But by adding a clause under environmental considerations, the changes needed are within reach.

Consider refillable totes for dry goods, refillable bladders for liquid, and new services that come with an environmental certification. It is not as problematic as we think. From topdressing with compost, lining fields, and even office operations, purchasing green may involve more time researching but when 'lifecycle costs' are taken into consideration, the benefits become obvious. Do not assume there is always a cost to having a 'green conscience.'

— Presented by Cindy Toth, Town of Oakville. Summarized by Jane Arnett-Rivers.

Excellent Reference Sites

The Green Industry Guide to Environmental Purchasing
www.deq.state.mi.us/documents/de-ess-p2-turf-purchasingguide.pdf

Rockford Park District Environmental Policy: www.rockfordparkdistrict.org/pdf/environmental_policy.pdf

Commission for Environmental Cooperation: www.cec.org

The Tides Center, Paper for the Environment: www.conservatree.com

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