



Environmental Considerations for Patient Bedside Products

Products covered in this category include pitchers, tumblers, carafes, wash basins, utility basins, sitz baths, soap dishes, denture cups, utility bowls, emesis basins, bedpans, specimen pans, medicine cups, specimen containers, liners, and urinals. Consider the following environmental questions for the RFP/RFI process to support informed decision making.

Attribute	Suggested RFP Language ("Yes" is the preferred answer)	Consideration/Requirement Definition	Notes
Recycled Content – Product	Does the product contain postconsumer recycled content? (Yes/No)	Many plastic and cardboard products are commonly made with recycled content. Postconsumer recycled content means it uses materials that were collected after consumer use and used back in the manufacturing process. EPA has issued guidelines on the minimum postconsumer content in liners of 10%.	Some manufacturers are making bags using less plastic as opposed to recycled content. We have not determined what minimum thickness would be considered a "source reduced" product so have not included this consideration at this time.
Recycled Content - Package	Does the product's primary packaging contain postconsumer recycled content? (Yes/No) If yes, what percentage?	The primary packaging surrounds the product. For example the paper wrap surrounding a roll of toilet paper is primary packaging. (Secondary packaging surrounds a group of products, such as the box containing rolls of toilet paper.) Postconsumer recycled content material is a material or finished product that has served its intended use and has been diverted or recovered from waste destined for disposal, having completed its life as a consumer item. Basically, it is the material collected from recycling programs. It is calculated as a percentage of the total weight of the product.	Buying recycled-content products ensures that the materials collected in recycling programs will be used again in the manufacture of new products. According to EPA, recommending postconsumer recycled content levels for items will have the most positive impact on reducing the amount of solid waste requiring disposal. Purchasers should prefer products with the highest postconsumer recycled content that also meet other considerations. Use of postconsumer recycled content is fundamental to closing the loop in the recycling process, using fewer natural resources, and based on EPA's ReCon Tool, can reduce greenhouse gas emissions. There are exceptions to the use of postconsumer recycled content in sterile barrier packaging (ISO 11607-1).
Heavy Metals	Is the product, including when printed, free of inks, dyes, pigments or stabilizers, or any other additives containing lead, mercury, cadmium or hexavalent chromium? (Yes/No/NA)	Some plastic or cardboard products contain pigmented materials that could be toxic to humans and the environment. Of special concern is the presence of heavy metals, such as lead and chromium in pigments and dyes used in printing.	

Phthalates	Is this product free of intentionally added phthalates? (Yes/No)	It's uncertain if phthalates are used in liners. Phthalates are esters of phthalic acid mainly used as plasticizers (substances added to plastics to increase their flexibility, transparency, durability, and longevity). They are used primarily to soften polyvinyl chloride (PVC). Di-2-ethyl hexyl phthalate (DEHP) CAS 117-81-7, Benzylbutylphthalate (BBP) CAS 85-68-7, Di-n-hexyl phthalate (DnHP) CAS 84-75-3, Di-isodecyl phthalate (DIDP) CAS 68515-49-1 or 26761-40-0, Dibutyl phthalate (DBP) CAS 84-74-2	People can be exposed through the use of products containing these chemicals. In 2002, the FDA issued a Public Health Notification for PVC devices containing DEHP. DEHP is also listed as a carcinogen on the Prop 65 list. The National Research Council has also noted the importance of looking at cumulative exposure from multiple phthalates. These five phthalates are listed as reproductive toxicants by Prop 65. The typical resins used in the manufacture of trash bags are low density (LDPE), high density (HDPE), linear low density (LLDPE) and high molecular weight high density polyethylene (HMW-HDPE).
Biobased	Does this product contain a percentage of biobased materials? (Yes/No) if yes, please indicate the percentage.	Defined by the 2002 Farm Bill , biobased products are commercial or industrial products (other than food or feed) that are composed in whole, or in significant part, of biological products, renewable agricultural materials (including plant, animal, and marine materials), or forestry materials.	The USDA BioPreferred Program requires federal agencies to purchase products with biobased content (as well as other environmentally preferable attributes). USDA sets a percentage of biobased materials for some products and labels those that meet the requirements. The label cannot be used for products that have long been made of cotton, wool, wood or paper as the program aims to target creating new markets. Although biobased content may be an environmentally preferable single attribute, it is important to consider other materials in the product to ensure the entire product is a better alternative.
Compostable/ Biodegradable	Is this product certified as "commercially" compostable (i.e., does it meet ASTM D6400 or D6868, DIN EN 13432, AS 4376, or ISO 17088)? (Yes/No/NA)	Composting claims must be substantiated and validated and product labeling should be qualified. Third party verification agencies include: Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI), AIB Vincotte Inter (Belgium), Din Certco (European Union), Australian Environmental Labeling Association (Australia) and Japan Bioplastics Association (Japan)	According to the FTC Green Guides, unqualified degradable claims for items that are customarily disposed in landfills, incinerators, and recycling facilities are deceptive because these locations do not present conditions in which complete decomposition will occur in one year.

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