

WASTE PREVENTION AND RECYCLING POLICY

Purpose

VSU recognizes its role as a leader in the community with regard to environmental policies and, with the adoption of this policy, demonstrates its intention to ensure responsible stewardship of the environmental resources under its influence. More specifically, the purpose of this policy is to set forth standards and organizational processes aimed at: 1) reducing waste at the source; 2) encouraging the purchase and use of durable and reusable products; 3) encouraging the purchase of high postconsumer content recycled products; 4) increasing the total volume of waste materials diverted from landfills to recycling processes; 5) ensuring the long term viability of campus recycling operations through appropriate educational programs, coordination, management and oversight; and 6) remaining in compliance with Federal and Georgia State Law. Valdosta State University will have a campus-wide program for the collection of waste and recycling of materials used in large quantities by the campus community and otherwise discarded on campus, to include, but not necessarily limited to the following: white paper, newspaper, cardboard, aluminum cans, and plastic beverage bottles. In addition to the fact that we are an agency of the State of Georgia, and therefore mandated by the 1990 Georgia Solid Waste Management Act to have a waste reduction and recycling program, and that we are a unit of the University System of Georgia, which mandates that each campus "practice waste minimization and pollution prevention by adopting recycling programs for all appropriate materials, purchasing recycled products, substituting less hazardous materials and establishing microscale chemistry operations (USG Board of Regents Policy Manual 916.g)," we should also recycle for all of the following reasons:

- Recycling saves landfill space (each ton of paper saves three cubic yards, a ton of aluminum cans 10 cubic yards, a ton of plastic bottles 30 cubic yards) and land filling costs, which are rising;
- Recycling saves natural resources; each ton of recycled paper can save 17 trees, 380 gallons of oil and 7,000 gallons of water; a ton of recycled aluminum saves over 16,000 gallons of water;
- Recycling saves energy; each ton of recycled paper can save 4,000 kilowatt hours, a ton of aluminum can save 14,000 kilowatt hours;
- Recycling reduces pollution; each ton of recycled paper reduces air pollutants by 60 pounds and produces virtually no dioxin (the most carcinogenic chemical known), which is a water-polluting byproduct of the bleaching of raw wood pulp;
- Recycling is an engine of economic development, creating jobs in the local community; recycling a ton of paper creates 5 times as many jobs as producing paper from raw materials; incinerating 10,000 tons of waste creates one job, land filling the same amount creates 6 jobs, and recycling that amount creates 36 jobs;
- VSU, as the leading educational institution for the south Georgia region, must lead by example in an effort to increase recycling regionally; our increasingly cosmopolitan student body and faculty expect it; a 2005 study by the South Georgia Regional Development Commission found that annually in the ten-county region over 45,000 tons (62% of the municipal waste stream, and including over 13,000 tons of cardboard alone) of recyclable materials are landfilled.

Procedures

The following practices shall be implemented and maintained through all VSU operations.

Reduce the Amount of Waste Generated

- I. Departments will consider the purchase of durable and reusable products by evaluating the total cost of ownership for any products specified or purchased.
- II. Suppliers will be required to utilize minimal and reusable packaging materials as deemed appropriate in the products packaging specifications. Suppliers with contracts that require installation will be required to take back their packaging materials/containers when written in their contract requirements.

III. Copying and Printing

- A. Whenever feasible, electronic distribution of correspondence shall replace written correspondence. On campus correspondence shall be by email, list serves, and electronic bulletin boards. Only one printed copy of the correspondence should be sent to each department to be routed or posted for interested parties to read. Unnecessary printed copies of electronic correspondence are discouraged.
- B. All office paper shall meet or exceed the State and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requirements for recycled content.
- C. Office paper shall be recycled by each department.
- D. Employees will reuse office paper whenever practical.
- E. Letters, reports and documents produced by campus departments should be printed on both sides when feasible for the intended use.
- F. Departments shall encourage two-sided copying and printing.
- G. Whenever practical, scrap paper printed only on one side shall be used for either producing rough drafts or as scratch pads.
- H. All requests for proposals and reports from outside vendors and consultants shall include the request that these be printed on both sides and using recycled content paper.
- I. When electronic communication is not feasible any forms used on the campus should include only the necessary information and number of copies. Necessary instruction sheets shall be printed on the back of the last page of the form.
- J. Annually, staff shall review mailing lists and delete out of date subscribers.

Standards and Specifications

VSU shall, at a minimum, conform to State of Georgia requirements and the federal purchasing guidelines developed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). For products which have been designated by either the State or EPA, all bid specifications shall include products with the minimum recycled content and purchases must contain the minimum recycled content as long as

the products are available and meet the performance needs. See EPA website for minimum percentage of recycled content and listings of the most common recyclable materials.

Purchasing

1) General

VSU shall continue to improve its efforts toward recycling and waste reduction goals by defining purchasing policies aimed at encouraging the procurement of recycled products.

Initially the focus of this policy is on toner and inkjet cartridges for printers and copiers, paper products for printers and copiers, and papers in items printed off campus because these groups of products are the largest volumes of recycled commodities ordered by the campus. Detailed expenditure policies shall be recommended by the Vice President for Finance and Administration to the Faculty Senate Environmental Issues Committee and coordinated policy will be forwarded through the Faculty Senate and COSA for the President's approval and signature.

2) Requirement to Purchase Recycled Paper Products

The VSU Central Stores should be used for the purchase of all bond paper products used in copiers and printers. The VSU Central Stores shall procure paper products meeting the State of Georgia regulations for price and recycled content.

3) Elimination of Prohibitions

Purchasing Department shall be responsible for informing the Faculty Senate, COSA, and the SGA of purchasing policy changes that limit or restrict purchases of bond paper, inkjet cartridges, or toner cartridges based on recycled content or ability to be recycled. Additionally, VSU and individual departmental policy and procedures shall be updated to reflect any changes.

Recycling

- 1) All University employees shall be encouraged to participate in campus recycling efforts.
- 2) General practices regarding recycling, reuse and waste reduction shall be included as part of the standard job orientation for all new employees.
- 3) The Physical Plant and Facilities Planning Department shall ensure that all new construction is designed to facilitate recycling in both interior and exterior locations.

- 4) Whenever possible and economically feasible, the University and its contractors shall reuse or recycle materials resulting from the demolition or remodeling of campus facilities.
- 5) Physical Plant will be responsible for providing educational programs and materials for faculty and staff. Education will include a discussion of VSU's commitment and responsibilities regarding waste prevention, recycling instructions on how various commodities can be recycled, information contacts and phone numbers, and any applicable incentives.
- 6) Departmental Contacts: Each Department should appoint a primary contact person for recycling.
- 7) Students: Educational presentations regarding the need for recycling and waste reduction and ways to participate in campus recycling efforts will be made to all new students as part of their orientation. Additional educational programs shall be devised and implemented as the program improves.

Responsibilities

Recycling Coordinator

The Assistant Director for Physical Plant Operations shall coordinate the recycling program and at a minimum include the following materials: Aluminum, Corrugated Cardboard, Non-Corrugated Cardboard, Computer paper, Glass, Yard Wastes, Mixed paper (White paper), Newspaper, Plastic, Metal Tin & Steel cans, Building Materials, Auto Waste from campus vehicle maintenance (Oil, Batteries, Tires, etc.).

Waste Prevention

Each campus department shall coordinate the purchase of materials to ensure durable, recycled and recyclable goods and materials are purchased when feasible.

The Director of Environmental and Occupational Safety shall coordinate the storage of all hazardous materials on campus, keeping an inventory of all materials and maximum amounts that can be stored at each site. The Director shall inform the President and Cabinet of amount and location of toxic chemicals annually and recommend changes to reduce the severely hazardous chemicals.

Departments and Organizations

All departments and organizations engaged in individual recycling programs shall coordinate their activities with the Assistant Director for Physical Plant Operations and provide records of their operations (if separate from the campus-wide program) on a quarterly basis within fifteen days following the end of each calendar quarter.

Faculty Senate Environmental Issues Committee

The Environmental Issues Committee of the Faculty Senate will recommend university policy, review the recycling program, and make recommendations for the campus waste prevention and recycling operations. The Committee should review quarterly recycling reports and determine whether any commodities should be added to or deleted from VSU's recycling operations.