

Sustainable Purchasing Guide



Indoor Furniture

Use this Guide When Purchasing

- Workstations, desks
- Task chairs
- Conference room furniture - tables, chairs, etc.
- Partitions
- Lounge furniture - couches, upholstered chairs, etc.

Furniture can contain a lot of hidden toxic chemicals that can either off-gas or rub off products over time, affecting human health. The Minimum Requirements in this guide focus on reducing exposures to harmful chemicals, among other beneficial attributes.



How to Purchase

Prior to purchasing new furniture, check for surplus furniture available from other departments. Otherwise, check with your central procurement office or administrative or facilities staff to find out if you have any furniture standards (required brand/model) and/or contracts that employees are required to use to purchase furniture. When you are seeking these products in a store or online, check the product details to confirm it meets the Minimum Requirements listed below. If furniture is being specified by hired consultants, such as architects or interior designers, ensure they are referencing these Minimum Requirements as well.

Product Requirements - *specify or seek:*

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS/SPECIFICATIONS

For all new furniture:

- Product currently has at least one of the following certifications (which limit off-gassing):
 - UL GREENGUARD Gold
 - SCS Indoor Advantage Gold
 - MAS Certified Green
 - Intertek Clean Air Gold
- Product is free of intentionally-added antimicrobials, polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), and vinyl (PVC) - as verified by manufacturer disclosure statements

For new upholstered furniture also include the following:

- Product is free of added flame retardants (as verified by product tag/label)
- Textile currently has at least one of the following certifications:
 - GOTS
 - Oeko-Tex 100
 - Cradle to Cradle (C2C)
 - NSF/ANSI 336 (FACTS label)
 - GreenScreen

Product Requirements - *continued*

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Minimum Requirements plus one or more of the following:

- Ergonomic features included, such as height-adjustability
- GreenScreen certified
- International Living Future Institute Declare Verified Red List Free
- BIFMA level certified
- Cradle to Cradle (C2C) certified
- Manufacturer or vendor has an active end-of-life take-back and recycling program available
- For wood-containing furniture, wood is FSC certified

Or seek reused or remanufactured in lieu of new furniture. For reupholstered used furniture, follow the textile-related minimum criteria and try to confirm furniture does not contain added flame retardants.

Ecolabels to Look For



Benefits

- Certified low-emitting furniture minimizes impact on indoor air quality, and studies show that good indoor air quality supports occupant productivity and health.
- Reducing toxic chemicals in furniture reduces occupant exposure to substances known to be linked to cancer, hormonal problems, asthma, reproductive harm, and other chronic human health issues.

Additional Resources

- [Center for Environmental Health \(CEH\) Purchasing Healthier Furniture Resources](#) (lots of additional details!)
- [Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety Ergonomic Chair Fact Sheet](#)
- Check the [StopWaste Sustainable Purchasing Website](#) for additional implementation resources.

PRODUCT REGISTRIES

Find/verify certified furniture products by using the following online certified product registries:

- [Intertek Sustainability Directory](#)
- [MAS Certified Green Product Registry](#)
- [SCS Certified Green Products Guide](#)
- [UL SPOT Product Registry](#) (filter by product type and UL GREENGUARD Gold certification)
- [BIFMA level Product Registry](#)
- [C2C Certified Product Registry](#)
- [GreenScreen Certified Products List](#)
- [ILFI Declare Product List](#) (look for Red List Free indicator)

Note: There is no online certified product directory for FSC products. Instead, look for the FSC ecolabel on the product and/or verify with the product manufacturer.

Also, some companies like SCS and UL also verify other certifications, such as NSF/ANSI 336 (FACTS) and will include filters for those certifications in their online product registries.

For Oeko-Tex and GOTS certifications, look for the ecolabel and/or check the manufacturer's product information online.