

Purchasing for Pollution Prevention

Purchasing Cleaner Vehicles – Recommended Purchasing Specifications for Vehicle Bids

This document contains purchasing specifications recommended for reducing three hazardous substances found in vehicle parts – mercury, lead, and PVC (vinyl) – as well as recommendations pertaining to fuel economy. For more information on purchasing strategies for vehicles, see http://www.informinc.org/fact_P3vehicles.php.

RECOMMENDED SPECIFICATIONS

1. Include a prominent statement in the bid that demonstrates a commitment to pollution prevention and summarizes the environmental requirements.

Suggested language to insert in cover letter or on first page of bid document:

"The [insert name of purchasing agency] exercises a strong commitment to minimize adverse impacts on the air, water, and land through practicing pollution prevention. [Reference any relevant state laws, executive orders, or department polices.] In keeping with this commitment, bidders are encouraged to provide goods and services that do not contain hazardous materials and do not generate hazardous emissions during manufacture. Specifically, bidders are required to disclose vehicle components containing mercury, lead, and vinyl and to describe manufacturers' plans for phasing out the use of these materials. Furthermore, [insert name of purchasing agency] desires vehicles with superior fuel economy. See section [insert appropriate section or page number] of this solicitation for more details."

2. MERCURY: Include in the bid a requirement that vehicle headlamps not contain mercury and notify manufacturers that you intend to purchase vehicles completely free of mercury by next year.

Suggested language to insert in the bid document:

"Mercury is toxic to the nervous system and mercury contamination has resulted in fish consumption advisories in nearly all 50 states. [Consider including a statement about local mercury problems here.] As a result of the known environmental and human health impacts of mercury, it is required that no vehicle sold through this contract contain mercury-containing

HID headlamps. Furthermore, it is the intent of [insert name of purchasing entity], within one year, to phase out the purchase of vehicles that may contain mercury in any form, including mercury-containing ride-control switches, backlit LCD screens, and after-market accessories such as security systems."

3. LEAD: Include in the bid a requirement that manufacturers disclose all lead components in their vehicles and notify manufacturers that you intend to purchase vehicles completely free of lead wheel weights by 2006.

Suggested language to insert in the bid document:

"Vehicles are the top user of lead and the top source of lead releases in the US. [Consider including a statement about local lead problems here.] Since lead emissions contribute to the contamination of our environment and have significant health impacts, particularly among children, it is desirable that bidders provide products that reduce the use of lead in vehicles. Therefore, bidders are required to disclose which vehicles offered to agencies contain lead-containing components, such as wheel weights, vibration dampers, cabling, and electronic equipment. Furthermore, it is the intent of [insert name of purchasing entity] to phase out the purchase of vehicles containing lead wheel weights by 2006."

4. VINYL: Include bid requirements that disclose vehicle parts made from vinyl and manufacturer's plans for phasing out the use of vinyl cabling and interior/exterior trim.

Suggested language to insert in the bid document:

"Products containing polyvinyl chloride (PVC) can create dioxins when burned. In addition, PVC (vinyl) often contains heavy metals and phthalates, which have been

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linked to harmful health effects. It is desirable that bidders provide products that reduce the use of PVC in vehicles. Bidders are required to disclose which vehicles offered to agencies contain vinyl and identify the vinyl components in those vehicles (including instrument panels, cabling, undercoatings, etc). In addition, bidders shall detail each manufacturer's plans for phasing out vinyl cabling and interior/exterior trim."

5. FUEL EFFICIENCY: Include bid language that encourages vendors to bid vehicles with improved fuel economy.

Suggested language to insert in the bid document:

"Given that nearly one-quarter of all global warming emissions comes from transportation in the United States, vehicles are required to meet, by class, the minimum mpg standards listed below. Furthermore, bid responses that include, in each relevant class, vehicles that meet the high mpg ratings listed below will be preferred."

EPA CLASS SIZE	MINIMUM MPG REQUIREMENT *	HIGH MPG STANDARD **
Compact	27.6	32.8
Midsize Sedan	23.8	25.7
Large Sedan	22.1	23.6
Wagon	24.6	29
Small-Midsize SUV	9.3	24.8/23.7 †
Large SUV	15.2	18.2/17.3 †
Midsize Van	20.3	21.4
Large Van	15.4	16.4
Small-Midsize Pickup	19.1	23.1/19.5 †
Large Pickup	16.1	17.8/17.1 3†

* Based on the average combined, adjusted fuel economy (see note below) for vehicles in each class as determined by EPA.

** Based on the average fuel economy of the top four most efficient models in each class, excluding hybrids, as determined by EPA. For pickups only, top three most efficient models are used, owing to limited product offerings.

† Based on 2-wheel drive/4-wheel drive.

Source: American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE). Fuel economy data from EPA, Light-Duty Automotive Technology and Fuel Economy Trends: 1975 through 2003, EPA420-R-03-006, April 2003, <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/fetrends.htm>. Fuel economy test numbers (city and highway) are adjusted to account for the difference between test and real-world driving. It is the adjusted numbers that appear on the EPA label placed on vehicles at point of sale.

Actual specifications used by a state government

In its 2001 request for bids, Minnesota required disclosure of mercury and vinyl components.

- Actual specifications (PDF)
- Bid responses received: (PDF)
 - Ford
 - Chrysler
 - General Motors

For more information:

- For more information on mercury, lead, and vinyl in cars, see [http:// www.informinc.org/fact_P3vehicles.php](http://www.informinc.org/fact_P3vehicles.php).
- Assistance with purchasing cleaner vehicles: contact Sarah O'Brien, Senior Outreach Associate, INFORM at 802-479-5535 or obrien@informinc.org.
- Clean Car Campaign: For additional information on the Clean Car Campaign, a national effort aimed at improving the environmental attributes and performance of vehicles sold in the US, visit the campaign's website at www.cleancarcampaign.org or contact the Ecology Center's Jeff Gearhart at (734) 663-2400 x117 or Charles Griffith at (734) 663-2400 x116.
- American Council for a Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE): For additional information on the ACEEE, an organization dedicated to advancing energy efficiency as a means of promoting economic prosperity and environmental protection, visit the Council's website at www.aceee.org, review their publication "Greening Fleets" at <http://www.aceee.org/pubs/t024full.pdf>, or contact ACEEE's Therese Langer at 202-429-8873 or tlanger@aceee.org.
- Auto Mercury Switch Removal Instructions: <http://www.epa.gov/region5/air/mercury/autoswitch.htm>.
- Wisconsin Mercury Sourcebook Automotive Sector: <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/bnsdocs/hgsbook/auto.pdf>.

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