



PRACTICE

No. 6-40

Approved by
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M-NCPPC Sustainability Standards

AUTHORITY

This Administrative Practice was initially approved by the Executive Committee at its meeting on October 4, 1976, and last amended by the Commission on November 19, 2012.



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RESCISSION

The Practice, as amended on November 19, 2012, updates and replaces all other internal sustainability procedures.

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

This Practice (originally titled Commission Resource Conservation Program) was initially established to communicate agency-wide policy on the conservation of utilities sources, such as electricity, natural gas, fuel oil, and motor fuel. The Practice was revised on November 19, 2012 to update and replace initial measures through a broader understanding of sustainability standards, which benefit the environment, our workplace, and the communities we serve.

The Practice, as originally approved, has been revised as follows:

- May 1, 1979 and January 9, 1980: Incorporated updated responsibilities due to agency restructuring.
- November 19, 2012: Policy amended to:
 - Reflect more modern concepts in the area of sustainability, including:
 - Green building management strategies which meet nationally accepted sustainability certifications for energy conservation and use of renewable resources;
 - Procurement of goods and services aimed at high efficiency products and other sustainable practices;
 - Implementation of green development strategies in community planning, landscape design and other site planning;
 - Elements aimed to foster ongoing awareness among our employees and patrons on sustainability objectives and programs; and
 - Updated County and State sustainability mandates.

REFERENCES

Federal/State/Local Standards:

- Maryland Stormwater Management Act of 2007 and accompanying Environmental Site Design Standards
- Maryland Code, State Finance and Procurement, § 5-312, High Performance Building Act

- Prince George’s County Executive Order 22-2007, Goes Green Program
- Prince George’s County Energy Policy
- Montgomery County Bill 32-07, Environmental Sustainability Climate Protection Plan
- Montgomery County Code Section 18A, Energy Policy—Regulations
- Montgomery County Resolution 16-757, County Energy Policy (with reference to Interagency Committee on Energy and Utilities Management)
- Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Certification Standards as issued by the United States Green Building Council
- Standards and Guidelines for Sustainable Sites (United States Sustainable Sites Initiative)
- Maryland Sustainable Communities Act of 2010

M-NCPPC Policies:

- Administrative Practice 4-10, Purchasing Policy
- Administrative Practice 2-18, Work-Life Program and related Administrative Procedures including:
 - 95-02, Compressed Scheduling
 - 95-04, Telework
 - 03-02, Alternative Commuting Resources

APPLICATION

This Practice applies agency-wide.

DEFINITIONS

Chlorine-free Processing: Paper is whitened without the use of chlorine in the process (PCF), eliminating production of chlorinated toxic chemicals and dioxins in processing wastes.

Energy Star: The Department of Energy rating for appliances and building products that minimize the use of energy.

Environmental Site Design (ESD): Using small-scale stormwater management practices, nonstructural techniques, and better site planning to mimic natural hydrologic runoff characteristics and minimize the impact of land development on water resources.

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification: A third-party guarantee that wood products, including paper, are harvested from a certified sustainably managed forest.

Green Practice: The wise use of resources, conservation, and innovative environment-friendly designs that create or enhance sustainability.

Greenhouse Gas (GHG): A gas that increases the atmospheric reflection of infrared heat emissions from Earth’s surface, measured in carbon dioxide equivalent.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED): A building certification system designed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) that promotes design and construction strategies aimed at improving environment and resource stewardship. The tiered standards, which use Certified, Silver, Gold, and Platinum, vary by project type and are made available at USGBC.org.

Net Metering: Net metering is a policy that allows a solar-system owner to receive credit on his/her electricity bill for surplus solar electricity sent back to the utility.

Post-Consumer Recycled Content: Contains material that was consumed in a final product and then recycled.

Renewable Energy Certificate: Also known as “Green Tags” and “Green Certificates” is a tradable, non-tangible energy commodity that represents proof that one megawatt-hour of electricity was generated from an eligible renewable energy resource. Renewable Energy Certificates provide organizations a convenient way to purchase renewable energy, offset carbon emissions, and encourage clean energy development.

Smart Growth: Urban planning that supports efficient and sustainable land development and utilizes redevelopment that optimizes prior infrastructure investments. Smart growth incorporates strategies such as mixed-use urban centers that support and enhance public transit; promote walking and bicycling, provide for a range of housing and retail options, and consume less land that can be preserved for open spaces and natural systems.

Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES): A rating system, similar to LEED developed by the American Society of Landscape Architects, that establishes voluntary national guidelines and performance benchmarks for sustainable land design, construction and maintenance practices.

Sustainability: Creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, and preserves resources so that they are not depleted or permanently damaged.

POLICY

The M-NCPPC is committed to stewardship of the environment, our community, and the workplace through the implementation of sustainable practices that preserve natural and economic resources, reduce waste and consumption, reduce the carbon footprint, promote green practices in our facilities and programs, and support the wellness of our employees and community.

Sustainability efforts shall increase the value or longevity of services while reducing reliance on resources and the negative effect on health or the environment.

The goal of this agency is to lead and implement meaningful sustainability initiatives. The sustainability goals outlined in this Practice are to be carried out as an agency, wherever feasible, and implemented within each department. The feasibility analysis of initiatives should consider the following:

- The prudent use of public dollars;
- The availability of green materials/services;
- The ability to maintain or improve existing service levels and safety; and
- The ability to safeguard the integrity of facilities/structures, including concerns for historic preservation.

These goals are intended to serve as benchmarks that may be further enhanced on a departmental, programmatic, or facility basis. It is recognized that certifications/standards identified in this Practice may evolve over time. The agency shall be guided by the certification/standard requirements that are in place at the time an initiative is being designed.

To implement this policy, each Department shall generate a Sustainability Plan that explains how goals identified in this Practice are being implemented for its respective facilities, operations or services. These Plans shall be presented to the Executive Committee by September 2013 and updated at least every two years.

The agency's sustainability efforts under this Practice also will be supported through a Sustainability Committee comprised of representatives from each department. The Committee shall: ensure coordinated efforts for agency-wide initiatives wherever practical; share ideas and expertise for the implementation on sustainability goals on a departmental level; prepare a Sustainability Report to the Commission that describes initiatives implemented throughout the agency, and recommend new or revised goals to ensure that the M-NCPPC stays at the forefront of sustainability practices.

Specific requirements for development of Sustainability Plans and reporting results to the Executive Committee and Commission are outlined in the Section titled Responsibilities. The following goals and objectives are designed to guide implementation of this Sustainability policy.

- I. Utility/Energy Conservation:** Conserve natural and fiscal resources by eliminating waste, improving efficiency, reducing the consumption of energy, and increasing the use of renewable sources of energy. Whenever feasible, new appliances and building materials shall meet Energy Star or equivalent rating for high efficiency and energy conservation. This should be in addition to also considering other environmental attributes such as recyclability and applicable federal/state safety and building code requirements.
 - A. Utility Measurement and Monitoring**
 1. Department sustainability coordinators shall collect utility use information to develop/enhance utility management standards and track the cost of each facility's utility consumption over time.

2. Utility consumption trends shall be made available to facility managers and Department Directors to evaluate and refine utility and cost saving practices.
3. Managers who operate buildings or spaces leased by the M-NCPPC should work with the facility owners to include utility metering or reporting for the leased space(s).

B. Conservation of Electricity and Natural Gas

1. In addition to established internal maintenance programs, departments should pursue grants for energy efficiency studies, upgrades, and retrofits for planned and existing facilities.
2. All M-NCPPC facility managers should seek to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Volume Program for Operations and Maintenance, or LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations and Maintenance criteria, for at least a Silver or equivalent rating standards for operations and maintenance. These standards are issued by the U.S. Green Building Council which can be accessed through its website (www.usgbc.org).
3. Where practical, indoor and outdoor lighting fixtures shall be programmable or linked to occupancy or motion sensor(s).
4. Light emitting diodes (LEDs), daylight fixtures, or other efficient low-energy lighting solutions should be used in place of incandescent, halogen, or fluorescent lights, where practical.
5. By 2020, the agency through coordination with the Department of Finance, will strive to meet a target whereby 40% of its electricity is produced or supported through renewable energy sources. These sources may include, but are not limited to, the purchase of Renewable Energy Certificates, onsite generation of energy from renewable sources (such as wind, solar, geothermal, water, etc.), and/or the acquisition of renewable energy from utility companies. This target may be adjusted by the Executive Committee with input from the Secretary-Treasurer based on fluctuating costs and availability of renewable energy sources.
6. Renewable sources (such as solar, wind and geothermal) should be considered for new and replacement systems where life cycle cost savings are justified in addition to aggregate net metering or power purchase agreements, among other financing or contract mechanisms, to further reduce the Commission's carbon footprint with its energy use, save costs, and further promote clean power alternatives wherever practicable.

C. Conservation of Water

1. Install and properly maintain automatic faucets, where practical.
2. Whenever feasible, utilize low flow toilets and other innovations to reduce water demands.

3. Investigate and where feasible, install an efficient infrastructure for use of rainwater or grey water at M-NCPPC facilities, including water amenities and landscape watering.
4. Upon learning of any abnormal water usage pattern, facility managers shall investigate, locate, and immediately repair any leaks and inefficiencies.
5. Strive to plant native trees and shrubs in landscaping.
6. Strive to reduce lawn areas to minimize the need for irrigation and plant areas with appropriate drought tolerant native species.

D. Management of Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Systems

Whenever feasible:

1. Insulate exposed piping and ventilation ducts in accordance with at least LEED Silver or equivalent standard.
2. Integrate installation of high efficiency HVAC equipment in new construction or in replacement plans for existing equipment, such as Energy Star or equivalent.
3. Use programmable thermostats to minimize HVAC use when buildings are not in use.
4. In the planning of new buildings or major renovations to existing buildings, review insulation specifications to meet LEED Silver or equivalent standards.

E. Fleet Management and Use of Alternative Commuting Resources

1. Employees utilizing M-NCPPC vehicles are encouraged to carpool with other employees to conserve fuel, minimize operating costs, and reduce environmental impacts related to pollution and congestion.
2. Fleet managers shall assist Departments in assessing the functional use/need of vehicles based on assigned work program needs, and recommend vehicle purchases to most effectively meet these needs to include factors such as fuel/energy efficiency, safety, and effective operation. All new vehicle purchases shall consider the most energy efficient options suitable to meet the indicated use for the vehicle.
3. Vehicle assignments shall ensure the most efficient use of the agency's fleet.
4. To maintain highest operating efficiency, fleet managers should ensure that all vehicles receive periodic maintenance consistent with manufacturer specifications.
5. Reduce impact of employee travel to and from M-NCPPC facilities by implementing the following strategies:
 - a) Implement feasible options and/or incentives to encourage staff's use of public transportation, regional commuting resources (e.g., ride share and car pools), and internal programs such as departmental pool vehicles and vanpools.

- b) Establish and encourage carpooling by M-NCPPC employees, allocating reserved spaces for carpoolers.
- c) Encourage the use of alternate work arrangements such as Telework and Compressed Workweeks to reduce, among other things, environmental impact and costs/needs associated with workspace operations.
- d) Capitalize on meeting and conferencing technology by using more phone and video conference calls (including webinars for training), even locally, to cut back on use of vehicles and travel times.

II. Sustainable Acquisition and Use of Agency Supplies: Develop procurement specifications that encourage the use of goods and services which support the agency's commitment to sustainability in areas including, but not limited to, resources conservation, protection of the environment, and workplace health and safety.

A. Office Supplies and Furniture

- 1. Actively reuse office supplies whenever possible, maintaining a returned inventory of supplies for reuse.
- 2. Durable office equipment, including furniture, should be considered for reuse or repurpose by other M-NCPPC facilities/operations before it is recycled/surplused/or disposed.
- 3. All disposal or external surplus/recycling of M-NCPPC property shall be coordinated with the Department of Finance, Purchasing Office, to ensure-adherence to legal dispossession of assets, with a preference placed on repurposing outside M-NCPPC for the benefit of the community.
- 4. Where feasible, identify and use environmentally friendly cleaning supplies/other products and services that are effective, enhance worker safety and health, and meet or exceed federal/state safety requirements.

B. Printing and Copying

- 1. Utilize two-sided printing whenever one-sided printing is not necessary.
- 2. Limit use of color copying/printing to reduce costs and resources.
- 3. Unless specific job demands or technical specifications of a printer require otherwise, purchase and use 100% post-consumer recycled paper, preferably with chlorine-free processing.
- 4. Purchase of papers containing less than 100% post-consumer content should be limited to those that are Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certified.
- 5. Incorporate other practical measures to reduce print material such as e-signatures, document imaging, and other paperless means of doing business.

C. Procurement

- 1. Procurement policies shall incorporate sustainable purchasing guidelines to secure economies of scale and promote sustainable product and service offerings by vendors. (See, for example, the Environmental Protection Agency's list of greener products that promote resource conservation, efficiency, safer

alternatives, and, recycled content and recyclability, among other factors, in addition to other, similar sources. See also Section I.B., Conservation of Electricity and Natural Gas.)

2. Purchases should be combined whenever reasonable to reduce deliveries to minimum essential requirements, to save costs and energy where possible.
3. In cooperation with the Chief Information Officer, departments should create and sustain an efficient information technology (IT) infrastructure that supports operational needs while increasing paperless options for reviewing and storing information, and using environmentally preferable and energy efficient equipment including computers, printers, copiers, document imaging systems, servers, etc.).

III. Recycling and Solid Waste Management: Implement projects and programs to recycle, reuse, and reduce solid wastes used by M-NCPPC employees and patrons to meet or exceed the regulatory mandates established by government regulations. Recycling and disposal of materials shall comply with relevant federal/State safety regulations.

- A. Implement recycling and reuse programs to achieve an overall rate of 90% of recyclable materials mandated by state or local law (including mixed paper, commingled materials, yard trim materials, Christmas trees, and scrap metal).
- B. Implement recycling and reuse programs to include other material to include but not be limited to oils, batteries, asphalt, tires, furniture, computers, electronics, construction debris, etc.
- C. Implement programs to recycle and reuse plant, tree, and related vegetation materials to include composting within the natural resources of the agency.
- D. Develop community-based information programs to encourage, demonstrate, and educate patrons on best practices to recycle, reuse, and reduce solid waste at M-NCPPC facilities/programs.

IV. Sustainable Infrastructure and Natural Areas: The M-NCPPC will utilize the national and State standards for green practices in the design of facilities and in the management of natural resources. Natural areas will be managed to maintain healthy ecosystems and maximize biodiversity.

A. Sustainable Building - Whenever feasible:

1. All new construction of M-NCPPC buildings shall be at least Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver eligible or equivalent standard.
2. Major renovation of M-NCPPC buildings shall meet at least LEED Silver eligibility or equivalent standard.
3. Capital improvement plans shall include implementation of LEED or equivalent standards in construction and renovation.

4. When planning new office sites, consideration should be given to locations that offer access to public transportation resources such as metro rail, trains, buses, and carpools.

B. Sustainable Site Work - Where appropriate:

1. Capital improvement plans shall include implementation of the Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) or equivalent standards (such as LEED) in construction and renovation.
2. Plant native trees and shrubs around agency-owned buildings to provide wind and summer sun shelter.
3. Utilize appropriate site layout, landscaping, and material choice to reduce heat island effect and summer cooling costs.
4. Use best practices including, but not limited to, current environmental site design standards to avoid, trap, and control erosion or surface runoff of detergents, fertilizers, pesticides, and soil into storm drains and surface waters.

C. Natural Resources Management:

1. Develop and implement a Natural Resources Management Plan for all parklands acquired for conservation purposes by 2012. This Plan provides general guidance to park management staff for the management of natural areas in parks.
2. Maintain, and expand as appropriate, the existing program for the inventory, assessment, and control of non-native and invasive (NNI) plants.
3. Maintain, and expand as appropriate, the existing program for the control of nuisance wildlife (e.g. White-tailed deer, Canada geese, etc.)
4. Utilize integrated pest management practices, where effective.
5. Maintain, and expand, as required by State regulations, the storm sewer system, and the monitoring of water bodies and restoration of watersheds within the park system.

D. Community Planning and Development:

Where possible and practical, Community Planning and Development shall:

1. Plan and locate new development according to Smart Growth principles and in conjunction with Maryland Sustainability initiatives.
2. Locate recreation facilities to afford access via public transit and trails networks.
3. Co-locate community recreation centers and major recreation facilities with other public facilities.

- V. Health & and Wellness:** Promote safety, health, and wellness through our workplace, programs, and services.

- A. Support healthy communities by integrating sustainability concepts and green practices with relevant program offerings, to further enhance patron and employee well-being.
- B. Raise awareness of workplace health, safety, and wellness issues through comprehensive training and education programs targeting illness and injury prevention.
- C. Mitigate workplace hazards through timely identification, investigation, and remedial action. Whenever reasonable, complete collaborative reviews of accidents and design new programs to encourage greater understanding of risks and actions to implementation.

VI. Employee Education & Training on Sustainability Goals

- A. Sustainability efforts will be fostered through agency-wide promotion and education of environmental awareness and conservation.
- B. Employees should be encouraged to seek sustainability credentials appropriate to their work program.
- C. Supervisors are responsible for reviewing work program requirements as they pertain to implementation of sustainability efforts. Applicable sustainability goals are to be incorporated into employee performance expectations.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The following responsibilities are assigned for the overall administration of the agency's sustainability policy. Responsibilities may be delegated as appropriate.

Department Directors shall:

- Ensure compliance with this policy.
- Develop a departmental bi-annual Sustainability Plan that shall be presented to the Executive Committee by September 2013 to outline initiatives for the upcoming two-year period. The Sustainability Plan shall be reviewed and presented every two years.
- Following the first year of implementation of the Plan, Department Directors shall report of the status of achieving sustainability goals and objectives outlined in this Practice and in the departmental Sustainability Plan.
- Designate one or more employees to act as the departmental Sustainability Coordinator(s) and serve as the representative(s) to the agency-wide Sustainability Committee.

Departmental Sustainability Coordinators shall:

- Serve as the departmental liaison to the Sustainability Committee and as the point of contact and clearinghouse for all sustainability-related issues for the M-NCPPC.
- Assist the Department Director in preparing the departmental Sustainability Plan that meets, at a minimum, the sustainability goals and objectives set forth in this Practice.
- Communicate goals outlined in the departmental Sustainability Plan to all operations/facilities and provide support for implementation of the Plan.

- Collect data and perform analyses to monitor and assess ongoing progress on meeting standards and complying with guidelines.

Sustainability Committee shall:

- Share ideas for implementation of sustainability goals throughout the agency and on a departmental level.
- Promote sustainability awareness within M-NCPPC and the region.
- Recommend to Department Directors, and develop/implement approved communication tools to educate the workforce and the community on sustainability goals, initiatives, and progress.
- Recommend to Department Directors, new or amended initiatives to comply with the goals outlined in this Practice.
- Prepare a Sustainability Report to the Commission that describes the initiatives that have been implemented throughout the agency.
- Strengthen information exchange with intergovernmental relationships in the area of sustainability (e.g., Council of Governments, County/State agencies, local municipalities) and, where relevant, explore opportunities to promote cooperative partnerships and complementary cost-savings with potential implementation of various measures with or across organizational boundaries.