



THE TOWER COMPANIES  
*Transcend.*

the**blairs**

# MINI-GUIDE TO SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING



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# GREEN CLEANING

Cleaning in an environmentally friendly way is more effective than most people think.

Follow these three easy steps and you're well on your way:

1. Purchase non-toxic cleaning agents. Look for 3<sup>rd</sup> party certifications when purchasing cleaning products. Some reputable certifications are listed below.
2. Use vacuums with HEPA filters. This reduces dust and allergens in the air
3. Try using microfiber cloths instead of paper towels. They cost about a \$1 and can be washed and reused again and again.

3 <sup>RD</sup> PARTY CERTIFICATIONS	
 <p><b><u>Cradle to Cradle</u></b></p>	 <p><b>Environmental Protection Agency <u>Design for the Environment</u> (DfE)</b></p>
 <p><b><u>Green Seal</u></b></p>	 <p><b><u>Environmental Choice</u> (EcoLogo)</b></p>
 <p><b><u>GREENGUARD</u> <u>Indoor Air Quality Certified</u></b></p>	<p><b><u>Montgomery County Solid Waste District</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Montgomery County Ohio</u> Homemade and all natural cleaning products</b></p>

Popular green cleaning products include:

- Clorox Green Works (certified by DfE)
- Palmolive Ultra Original Dishwashing Liquid (certified by DfE)
- Method Products (certified by DfE)
- S.C. Johnson Nature's Source (certified by DfE)
- Office Depot green cleaners (certified by Green Seal)
- Simple Green (certified by Green Seal)

## PAPER PRODUCTS

### SUSTAINABLE PAPER PURCHASING



#### Recycled Content

About:

Recycled content comes in two forms: **pre-consumer** and **post-consumer**.

Pre-consumer means that the product contains leftovers from a manufacturing process.

Post-consumer refers to materials that is recycled from people's homes and businesses.



#### Sustainable Forestry

About:

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification ensures that wood is either (a) harvested from a sustainably managed forest or (b) certified to contain recycled content.

FSC is endorsed by the World Wildlife Foundation, the USGBC and Sierra Club. Click the link to learn more [about FSC](#) or here for a [3<sup>rd</sup> party white paper](#) on sustainable forestry certifications.




#### Chlorine Free Paper

About:

In the US, chlorine is used in many industrial applications, including forms of paper processing. Chlorine is harmful to the environment at even low levels, posing problems in soil and water.

By choosing paper products processed without chlorine, you're supporting a safer, healthier world. Learn more [here](#).

Looks for these certifications the next time you buy paper products. To learn more about ways to choose environmentally sustainable paper products, check out the Natural Resources Defense Council's (NRDC) [Guide to Paper Products](#).

<b>ELECTRONICS AND APPLIANCES</b> COMMON PRODUCTS RATED BY ENERGY STAR		<b>FURNITURE</b> SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>Computer Equipment</b>	<b>Consumer Electronics</b>	<b>Tips for Buying Furniture</b>
Computers & monitors Power adapters Printers Scanners	TVs DVD players Audio equipment Battery chargers Cordless phones Light bulbs (CFLs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid wood products with added urea-formaldehyde</li> <li>• Favor pre-owned goods</li> <li>• Buy local</li> </ul>
Click here for more products rated by <a href="#">Energy Star</a> . 		<a href="#">Sierra Club Green Home Guide</a>  <a href="#">NRDC Guide to Buying Wood Furniture</a>

### Purchasing Electronics

Many electronics use electricity even when they're off. Colloquially, this is known as [vampire power](#) because they're stealthily drawing power and the prongs of a plug look a little like vampire's teeth!

Phone chargers and TVs are common culprits. Unplugging electronics when you're not using them guarantees they're not consuming energy. You can also reduce your energy use by selecting products that are rated by Energy Star. You can learn more about Energy Star [here](#).

### Purchasing Furniture

Many types of wood furniture are made from composite wood products, like particle board and plywood. Those products often contain added urea-formaldehyde, a substance that the [EPA warns](#) can be detrimental to human health. Consider purchasing wood products that do not contain added urea-formaldehyde.

Urea-formaldehyde dissipates after manufacturing, so purchasing pre-owned products is a great way to avoid it. You can also reduce your impact by purchasing products with recycled content, rapidly renewable materials (like bamboo), and purchasing locally made products.

**FOODS AND DRINKS**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> PARTY CERTIFICATIONS**

 <p style="text-align: center;"><u><a href="#">Fair Trade</a></u></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><u><a href="#">Rainforest Alliance Certified</a></u></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><u><a href="#">USDA Certified Organic</a></u></p>
 <p style="text-align: center;"><u><a href="#">Food Alliance Certified</a></u></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><u><a href="#">Protected Harvest Certified</a></u></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><u><a href="#">Marine Stewardship Council</a></u> Blue Eco-Label</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">because shopping locally makes a difference</p>		

**Descriptions of 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Certifiers:**

**Fair Trade:** Fair trade Labeling Organizations (FLO) International is a nonprofit that develops and reviews fair trade standards and provides support for certified producers. FLO-CERT provides the certification of products.

**Food Alliance Certified:** The Food Alliance is a nonprofit organization that certifies farmers who produce food in an environmentally sustainable and socially responsible way.

**Rainforest Alliance Certified:** Rainforest Alliance works to conserve biodiversity and ensure sustainable livelihoods and land-use practices, business practices, and consumer behavior.

**USDA Certified Organic:** The National Organic Program, established in 2002 and administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is the federal regulatory framework that governs organic foods.

**Protected Harvest Certified:** Protected Harvest is a nonprofit organization that independently certifies farmers of stringent environmental growing standards.

**Marine Stewardship Council's Blue Eco-Label:** The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is an independent nonprofit that certifies fisheries that meet sustainable requirements.

## COMPACT FLUORESCENTS (CFLs)

### Purchasing



CFLs are the most cost effective, energy efficient way to light a room. However, the downside to CFLs is that they contain mercury, a toxic substance.

When you purchase CFLs, look for manufacturers who make low-mercury CFLs. They are just as easy to find and are the same price. Also, look for the Energy Star to guarantee they are energy efficient.

Common [manufacturers](#) of low-mercury bulbs include: GE, Osram Sylvania, Philips, and Westinghouse.

### Recycling



Montgomery County is home to one of the best recycling programs in the country.

Residents can drop off a wide variety of goods for recycling, including CFLs, to the Montgomery County recycling station.

Learn more by visiting [their website](#).