Green Printing Best Practices
Tips for Alameda County Agencies and Departments

☑ **Select a certified [Green Business Printer](https://greenbusinessca.org) (https://greenbusinessca.org)**
- Certified printers have shown their commitment to improving their operations and promoting green printing practices to their customers.

☑ **Specify preferable papers like recycled content and process chlorine-free**
- Always specify a minimum of 30% post-consumer recycled content. Buy the highest percentage of post-consumer recycled content available for your project.
- Ask your vendor for process chlorine-free papers (labelled as PCF or Enhanced ECF), when available, to reduce pollution associatedwith chlorine bleaching.
- Limit the use of dark or brightly colored papers, as they are more difficult to recycle.

☑ **Design your project to reduce paper use and ink waste**
- Minimize pages – Work with the project designer to condense or trim material.
- Use both sides of paper – Design the project to be double-sided.
- Use the lightest paper weight – For example, choose 20# over 24# for day-to-day printing.
- Don't run color to edge – Designing color to the edge of the sheet requires printing on larger sheets and trimming edges to get the "color bleed" effect.
- Choose a standard size for your project to maximize the number of pages per parent sheet.

☑ **Use environmentally preferable inks and safer printing chemicals**
- Minimize large color areas in design – Use pastel color paper instead of printing large color areas to reduce the amount of ink needed.
- Use printing chemicals and inks with low or no volatile organic compounds (VOCs) to reduce pollution and improved air quality.
- Specify the use of soy or vegetable-based inks (with low VOC) – These are less toxic than petroleum-based inks, are renewable and have proven themselves to be an effective alternative.
- Ask your printer to use safer alternatives to perchloroethylene, trichcloroethylene and/or methylene chloride in their roller blanket washes to protect human health and the environment.

☑ **Specialty finishes and the finishing touches**
- Minimize finishing coatings – When they are necessary, use non-catalytic cured, water-based lacquer or UV coatings. These are gentler on the environment and the paper is easier to recycle.
- Emboss instead of foil stamp to reduce waste.
- Label the use of recycled content, chlorine-free paper, or alternative inks on your project.
- Request reusable or minimal packaging of the finished product.

☑ **Reduce, reuse, and recycle to save valuable resources**
- Create a word template for Agency/Department letterhead that can be easily modified when necessary instead of using pre-printing letterhead that must be recycled when outdated.
- Do online outreach and move documents and services online for on-demand customer access.
- Purge your mailing lists regularly and delete duplicates.
- If you have outdated material that is reusable, donate it to a creative arts program. Search the RE:Source guide at www.Stopwaste.Org for reuse options. Recycle what can't be reused.

Alameda County
SUSTAINABILITY
Local Action, Global Impact.