

**THE ENVIRONMENTALLY PREFERABLE  
PURCHASING (EPP) WORK GROUP:  
RESOURCES FOR HEALTHY HOSPITALS**

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In 1998 the **United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** and the **American Hospital Association (AHA)** entered into a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** to reduce mercury and solid waste from health care facilities. The main goals of the MOU, now called **Hospitals for a Healthy Environment (H2E)**, are to virtually eliminate mercury from the health care waste stream by 2005 and to reduce solid waste volume by 33% in 2005 and 50% in 2010.

The **Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) Work Group** is one of twelve work groups established to implement the MOU. To assist health care facilities in identifying and buying environmentally preferable products, the EPP Work Group has:

- Written a **"How-To Guide"** on EPP for hospitals. This web-based guide introduces EPP, describes why hospitals should be doing EPP, and takes a hospital from EPP team formation to the completion of a pilot EPP project. The Guide also includes information on overcoming obstacles, tracking success, creating publicity, negotiating with Group Purchasing Organizations, and evaluating the validity of vendor claims.
- Produced a **list of resources** on EPP for hospitals.
- Created a **matrix of educational needs** on EPP for hospital personnel and also for those outside the hospital.
- Created a draft **presentation** on health care EPP.

The EPP Work Group is currently:

- Compiling a **specifications database** of environmental purchasing policies and specifications used in hospital RFP's or purchasing contracts.
- Updating and expanding the **presentation** on health care EPP.
- Developing a **national list of speakers** with expertise in health care EPP.

All of these materials are available on the web at:

**[http://www.geocities.com/EPP\\_how\\_to\\_guide/](http://www.geocities.com/EPP_how_to_guide/)**

The EPP Work Group's charge is to:

- Investigate, prioritize and implement strategies to promote the role of EPP in hospital procurement.
- Identify and collect existing resources on environmentally-preferred products.
- Determine, in consultation with the model plan work groups, product categories to target and prioritize.

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