**Printing & Publications – Sustainability Recommendations**

**President’s Sustainability Commission – Engagement Group**

This guide is intended to be a resource to departments, student groups, and organizations within Colorado State University who print flyers, posters, brochures, magazines, or other publications and want to print sustainably. Colorado State University is a member of the Post-Landfill Action Network (PLAN). The desire to join PLAN, was initiated by students to move the University towards a zero waste campus. One important pathway is to challenge ourselves to take into consideration the full life cycle of publications produced. Here are a few tips for how you can help.

Sustainability tips for production:

* Ask – does this need to be printed or is an online or digital delivery channel better?
* Review and edi draft documents on-screen rather than printing paper copies.
* Create standard-sized publications or print multiple copies on one sheet (a 6 x 6 in. publication may be unique but can waste paper and raise costs of the project).
* Approach color creatively, can you make a two or three-color design as effective as a full color publication?
* Design your publication with margins instead of full bleed. “Full bleed” is a printing term that means that the document is printed larger than the finished product and then cut to the desired size. This is so the color goes to the absolute edge of the paper. This is done because printers cannot print to the edges of paper. Designing your publication without a full bleed increases the quantity of prints per full sheet of paper and reduces the amount of paper that is cut off and wasted.
* If you are mailing publications, print addresses directly on the envelopes to eliminate the use of non-recyclable address stickers. Also, keep your mailing list up-to-date to prevent waste and allow subscribers to opt in for digital delivery rather than print delivery.
* Work with Creative Services, Fast Print, or an outside vendor to determine your options for green printing.

Sustainability tips for printing:

* Use recycled paper (there are lots of great 100% PSC papers on the market today and it can be cost-effective to target 50% PSC).
* [Use Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified paper.](https://us.fsc.org/en-us/market/paper-printing)
* [Use 100% PCF (Processed Chlorine Free) paper.](http://www.ecolabelindex.com/ecolabel/processed-chlorine-free)
* Use a paper produced and certified with logos of environmental attributes (i.e. [Ecologo](https://industries.ul.com/environment/certificationvalidation-marks/ecologo-product-certification/), Biogas Energy, [Ancient Forest Friendly](https://canopyplanet.org/solutions/ancient-forest-friendly/) and any of those mentioned above)
* What ink options are available? You may be able to request soy or vegetable-based inks, or a variety of other non-toxic inks on the market.
* Is the printing company Green e-Certified or using renewable energy to power their facility?
* Print digitally instead of offset whenever possible. This decreases the amount of paper overage and energy costs associated with offset printing.
* Do not print on neon Astrobright paper. This paper is not recyclable.
* Print only the amount you need and consider digital printing to make future runs easier and cheaper.
* Print double-sided if possible and try working with your department to default to print double-sided.

Finally, close the loop and ensure your publications are 100% recyclable:

* Find out if your printed product can be recycled after use. Some coatings that make paper smooth or shiny can make your printed product non-recyclable.
* Use non-toxic glues. These are available for most binding techniques, eliminating the need for ventilation of toxic fumes and waste management issues.

Spread the word and show that your publication is sustainable by using one of the following:

* “This publication was printed on post-consumer recycled paper.”
* “This publication was printed with plant-based inks.”
* “This publication is printed on 100% recycled paper.”
* “This publication was made with FSC-certified paper”
* “When you are finished, please pass along or recycle this publication.”

Thanks for your consideration and efforts to print and publish with sustainability in mind. Please share your examples with our committee – send examples to: [Kirstie.Tedrick@colostate.edu](mailto:Kirstie.Tedrick@colostate.edu). And, if you have questions or suggestions to improve this list, please email: [Kirstie.Tedrick@colostate.edu](mailto:Kirstie.Tedrick@colostate.edu).

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