



**PRESIDENT'S
SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY**

Printing & Publications – Sustainability Recommendations

Prepared by the President's Sustainability Commission – Engagement sub-committee

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 continually striving 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 edit 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.
 - Make sure you have an option for subscribers to choose online / email delivery instead of a printed hard copy.
- When working with Creative Services, Fast Print, or an outside vendor ask them on what sustainable options or services they offer.

Sustainability tips for printing:

- Purchase office paper with *post-consumer recycled, agricultural residue, and/or Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified content*. (There are lots of great papers containing 90-100% of these contents on the market today. It can be cost-effective to target 50% content at a minimum).
 - When you choose these criteria, you help the institution contribute to the conservation of water, energy, and virgin forest.
- [Use 100% PCF \(Processed Chlorine Free\) paper.](#)
- As a last resort, [Use Forest Stewardship Council \(FSC\) certified paper.](#)
- What ink options are available? You may be able to use or 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 bright neon colored 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 whenever possible and try working with your department to set the default to print double-sided.
- Make sure your documents do not have an extra linefeed character at the end that forces a new blank page at the end of documents printed from other operating systems.

If you are printing in the office:

- Sustainability best practice: consider getting rid of your personal desk-top printer.
 - The cost and impact per page are always less when using a shared multi-function central printer.
 - Ditching your desktop printer helps CSU save \$ and resources - on paper, ink, electricity, and equipment replacement
- Learn more about [Ditching Desktop Printers](#)

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 or more of the following tags:

- “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. And, if you have questions or suggestions to improve this list, please email: Kirstie.Tedrick@colostate.edu.

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