

Paper Use

Objective

Minimize the quantity of paper used, and when using paper products, select the most environmentally friendly options.

How Tos

- Limit the amount of handouts to those absolutely essential. Is the handout likely to be used again after the event? If not, consider projecting the material on a screen, making one large copy on flip-chart paper or cut the number in half by asking people to share them.
- Always copy materials on both sides of the paper.
- Avoid making extra copies; check the number of participants before copying.
- Ask exhibitors and workshop leaders to reduce the amount of paper they use. Provide suggestions for how they might do this.
- Avoid printing dates and slogans on handouts so remainders can be reused at later times.
- Create and publicize a “literature exchange” table area where people can place unwanted handouts, booklets or even books so others might use them. (This promotes more reuse before recycling!)
- If possible, use paper made from sustainably grown plant fibers and sustainably managed forests.
- Buy paper made from recycled material. One hundred percent recycled content and high in postconsumer content fiber is available. Avoid the use of virgin paper. Buy paper that is verified as sustainable by the Forest Stewardship Council or Sustainable Forestry Initiative (also known as FSC or SFI certified).
- Buy paper that has not been bleached with chlorine. (Traditionally, both white and colored paper are bleached with chlorine in manufacturing.) Check with your copy center or printer for options, and look for the appropriate symbol for proof. *Note: Acid-free is **not** the same as chlorine-free.*
- Select vegetable-based inks if you must print materials. They are now commonly available and work well on chlorine-free paper.
- Avoid paper contaminants such as fluorescent colors, glossy or plastic coatings, plastic windows, metal spiral or plastic coil bindings and adhesive products. These features make it difficult or impossible to recycle paper and may contribute to environmental contamination in production and/or disposal.
- Pay attention to more than just paper for handouts—use of paper napkins, plates, cups, etc., should also be considered.



United
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Women

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Helpful Resources

- If you are having trouble locating chlorine-free supplies, contact the Chlorine Free Products Association: 1-847-658-6104 or info@chlorinefreeproducts.org.
- The Environmental Paper Calculator is a great site to compare paper options in terms of their environmental impact: c.environmentalpaper.org.
- To understand more about chlorine-free paper, consult the Government Purchasing Project's website: www.gpp.org/clfree.html.
- To learn more about sustainable forest practices for making paper, consult the Forest Stewardship Council (www.fsc.org) and the Rainforest Alliance (www.rainforest-alliance.org).

Fast Facts

If 80,000 women (10 percent of our membership) go to three paperless meetings this year, we would save 12,500,000 gallons of water.

It takes 2.5 gallons of water to produce every sheet of paper. That only includes the actual production of the paper, not the recycling, the incineration or the growing of the trees.

Source: MeetGreen

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ranks the pulp and paper industry as the number one toxic polluter of U.S. waterways, discharging dioxin and heavy metals like mercury and lead. (Source: EPA, *The 2011 Annual Effluent Guidelines Review Report*)

When chlorine is used to bleach paper, it produces the chemical dioxin. Dioxin can cause health problems such as cancer, reproductive and hormone disruptions, birth defects, impaired child development, diabetes, liver damage and immune system suppression.

Dioxin is stored in body fat, so women tend to store it more than men because of our higher percentage of body fat. The only way women can get rid of this dangerous chemical is by transmitting it to their babies in utero and through breastmilk.

If 80,000 women (10 percent of our membership) reuse their paper coffee cup once at three meetings, 60,000 lbs. of greenhouse gasses would not go into the atmosphere and 33,600 pounds of waste would be diverted from landfills. What if we brought our own place setting to an event and then took it home to wash it? Wow! (Source: MeetGreen)

Glossary

Elemental chlorine free paper (ECF): ECF paper uses chlorine dioxide for bleaching the pulp. This reduces the amount of dioxin produced but does not eliminate it. This is the less preferable option but is better than standard chlorine-bleached paper.

Pre-consumer recycled paper: This form of paper uses byproducts or scraps after the manufacturing process.

Post-consumer recycled paper: This form of paper uses paper materials that consumers discarded, like old mail, newspapers, cardboard, etc. If given a choice, this is considered the preferable type of recycled paper.

Processed chlorine free paper (PCF): PCF refers to recycled paper. All recycled fibers have not been rebleached with chlorine-containing compounds. Any virgin fibers are totally chlorine-free. This is the United Methodist Women's preferred option where available.

Recycled vs. recyclable: *Recycled* paper is made with reprocessed waste materials. The label will give the percentage of recycled content. The higher the percentage the better. *Recyclable* paper means it can be recycled—it may or may not have any recycled content. Generally, most paper can be recycled, so, while reassuring, is not such an important feature by itself.

Totally chlorine free paper (TCF): TCF paper does not use pulp produced with chlorine or chlorine-containing compounds or bleaching agents. This refers to paper that does not contain any recycled content.

Policy Foundation

The Book of Discipline "The Natural World" (§1160), the Social Principles.

The Book of Resolutions #1022 "A Dioxin-free Future," #1024 "Environmental Law: The Precautionary Principle," #1029 "Protection of Water," #1030 "Recycling and the Use of Recycled Products."

United Methodist Women's 1997 chlorine-free policy: Use chlorine-free paper for all United Methodist Women's copying and publishing needs; switch to chlorine-free products wherever possible in all its offices and facilities and encourage United Methodist Women to do likewise.