

Pollution Prevention: Working with Suppliers

By Todd MacFadden and Michael P. Vogel, Ed.D.

Commercial Printing

Suppliers and vendors are usually the first place printers go for technical advice or troubleshooting. But this does not necessarily mean that suppliers and vendors have all the right answers, or necessarily even the right products for you. There are thousands of suppliers in this region. There is no reason you should settle for a given supplier just because of proximity. Some printers find that working with out-of-state suppliers is more appropriate for them.

By the same token, local suppliers can be knowledgeable and adaptive provided that you \hat{A} their customers \hat{A} create a demand for a given service. The fact sheets in this packet provide a wide variety of pollution prevention suggestions. Some of the techniques or process modifications highlighted are leading edge technologies that some supplier may not yet be familiar with. By working closely with suppliers locally and far away, you will be better informed, and suppliers and vendors will have incentives to adapt their product lines and services to meet the changing needs of the industry.

The following are general examples of questions printers could ask their suppliers: Does the supplier offer prepress equipment or supplies that reduce chemical use or discharge to the sewers? An example is aqueous (water-based) plate-development chemistry, rather than solvent-based chemistries, to minimize the discharge of certain classes of chemicals to the sewers.

1. What are the latest advances in desktop publishing and electronic image manipulation?
2. What opportunities exist for ordering materials in bulk? What agreements can be reached to establish a used container collection and reuse program?
3. Can suppliers collect and recover waste materials such as spent plates, ink and film?
4. Does the supplier offer coated paper that does not inhibit recycling of the finished product?
5. What can be done to reduce the costs of environmentally superior supplies?
6. How does the supplier keep up-to-date on new products?
7. Does the supplier seek continual environmental improvements in supplies and equipment?

Trade Associations

Many printers find that trade associations offer important environmental services. In addition to representing the voice of the industry politically, and offering valuable customer service and marketing assistance, many trade associations offer up-to-date, industry-specific environmental information. Moreover, they may be able to help you locate a particular product or supplier. Some of the more well-known trade associations for lithographic printers include:

Printing Industries of America
100 Daingerfield Road
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dr. Thomas Purcell, Director of Environmental
Programs
(703)519-8114

Printing Industries of Virginia
1108 East Main Street, Suite 300
Richmond, VA 23219

Robin Worth, President
(804)643-1800

Printing Industries of Metropolitan Washington
7 West Tower
1333 H Street NW
Washington, DC 20005

John Hawkins, Executive Vice President
(202)682-3001

Graphic Arts Technical Foundation
200 Deer Run Road
Sewickley, PA 15143-2600

Gary Jones, Manager, Environmental Info
1-800/910-GATF

National Association of Printers and Lithographers
780 Palisades Avenue
Teaneck, NJ 07666

Monica McCabe, Editorial Director
(201)342-0707

Waterless Printing Association
P.O. Box 59800
Chicago, IL 60645

Arthur LeFebvre, President
(312)743-5677

National Association of Printing Ink Manufacturers
777 Terrace Avenue
Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604-3110

James Sutphin, Executive Director
(201)288-9454

Environmental Conservation Board of the Graphic
Comm. Industries
1899 Preston White Drive
Reston, VA 22091

Mark Nuzzaco, Executive Director
(703)648-3218

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