

# Green Purchasing Made Easy

September 2019

## Vetted Product Catalog Continues to Grow

GX's contract portfolio has grown to 30 distinct contracts representing a variety of products including furnishings, housekeeping, administrative, surgical, medical and services. The agreements include products that meet a specific GX standard for sustainability that is established based on the type of suppliers in the category and what implications of the product's make-up impact the environment or patient, visitor and employee health.

The development and expansion of this contract portfolio allows GX members to easily adopt and implement the use of products that are more sustainable, and free of harmful chemicals. For busy hospital staff, this makes the overwhelming project of understanding what environmental factors should be prioritized, find products that MIGHT focus on those priorities and then research the product ingredients to determine if they are indeed, better from a sustainability standpoint.

## Why should I care about what's in a supply as long as it's what the clinician is requesting?

That is a question most of us don't even think about. Instead, we see our jobs as finding the product, negotiating a price, and delivering that supply to the right person, on time. But if we just stop and think about the implications of the choice, it might impact the product selected. Here are some examples of chemicals that are frequently contained in hospital supplies (clinical and non-clinical). The information for the grid came from [Toxic Free Future's website](#) and the [NIH Tox Town site](#).

		
Chemical	Concern	Often Found In
PFAS (poly- and perfluoroalkyl substances)	Cancer, Hormone Disruption, Liver & Kidney Toxicity, Harm to Immune System, Reproductive and Developmental Toxicity	Food containers, carpets, furniture, "water-resistant" fabrics, medical supplies
Phthalates (plasticizers)	Reproductive Development Disruption, Asthma	Many medical products containing plastic, often found in PVC products including vinyl flooring, personal care products
PVC	Endocrine disruptors - can include: Cancer or an increased risk of cancer, Changes in the development and behavior of infants and children, Changes in a developing fetus, Interference with the body's natural hormones, Changes in reproductive organs and function, Infertility and	Widely used; consumer products, building materials, medical supplies

	endometriosis, Disturbances in the immune and nervous system functions, Heart disease and stroke, Asthma	
Flame Retardants (various types)	Lower IQ, hyperactivity, poor attention, and slower motor development.	Furniture, other foam products
Mercury and Lead	<b>High Exposure to Mercury;</b> blindness and deafness, brain damage, digestive problems, kidney damage, lack of coordination, mental retardation. <b>High Exposure to Arsenic;</b> breathing problems, death if exposed to high levels, decreased intelligence, known human carcinogen: lung and skin cancer, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, peripheral nervous system problems	<b>Mercury:</b> fluorescent light bulbs, electrical fixtures, auto switches, thermostats, medical equipment, and dental amalgam fillings <b>Arsenic:</b> special glass, semi-conductors (gallium arsenide), some paints, dyes, metals, soaps, and drugs.
Formaldehyde	Identified as a cause of leukemia and nose and throat cancer, irritates the eyes, nose, and throat, and can cause skin problems. Asthma, as well as allergic responses, are associated with exposure to formaldehyde.	Carpets, plywood, furniture, adhesives, paint
Bisphenol A (BPA)	Testing in mice showed impact on brain development, reproductive development, miscarriages, downs syndrome, diabetes and obesity, cancer.	Leaching from plastic bottles/cans, dental materials
Antimicrobials	Human epidemiological studies have linked exposure to skin irritation, asthma, and allergies, and have also found evidence that these chemicals may harm beneficial gut bacteria	Soaps, hand sanitizers, and embedded in many plastic reusable products

## GX Blog Provides Great Reading!

We continue to post articles on our blog from both GX staff as well as subject matter experts from our suppliers and our entire community. The articles are usually focused on sustainability and the health care supply chain, but can sometimes include information that is relevant to our sustainability efforts in our everyday lives.

### Current Blogs

- [The Death of Responsibility and the American Environment](#)
- [Stop Reading Labels!](#)
- [Creating a Greener Operating Room](#)
- [Healthy Margins](#)
- [World Economic Forum “The Global Risks Report 2019” Zeros in on Climate-Change Led Events](#)

### Articles of Interest

[Four Steps to Tackle Supply Chain Sustainability](#) - SupplyChainBrain

[A Deluge of Batteries Is About to Rewire the Power Grid](#) - SupplyChainBrain

[McDonald's new paper straws aren't recyclable — but its axed plastic ones were](#) - CNN Business

[J&J Launches Global Sustainability Effort](#) - SupplyChainBrain