



# Purchasing Preference for Products and Product Packaging That Do Not Contain Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) Policy

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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1. **Question:** **What method is used to test PCBs in products?**

**Answer:** There are no standardized methods for testing PCBs in products, however, there is a standardized method for testing PCBs in environmental media, EPA method 1668C, and this is the method for testing PCBs in product samples.

EPA method 1668C tests for all 209 PCB compounds (i.e. congeners) whereas other PCB methods do not. PCB compounds that will most likely be present in current market products may not be detected in other PCB methods.

The Product Testing Program at Ecology has previously (and successfully) applied EPA Method 1668C for testing all 209 PCB compounds in product testing studies.

2. **Question:** **Should an environmental preference be included in every solicitation?**

**Answer:** No. Use the [Environmental Procurement Preference Calculator \(wa.gov\)](#) to determine if any environmental considerations should be used in a solicitation; if so, then you should include the preference language in your solicitation. If not, then preference language should not be included.

3. **Question:** **How are environmental considerations, used in solicitations and awards, tracked?**

**Answer:** When an environmental purchasing preference is included in a solicitation, as determined by the use of the [Environmental Procurement Preference Calculator \(wa.gov\)](#), agencies record this in WEBS by selecting “yes” that their solicitation includes language pertaining to, or is in compliance with, the environmental policies. If the purchasing preference is applied in the evaluation, then in the award section of WEBS, the “environmental preference” box should be checked. In addition, the “reports” tab in WEBS allows customers to pull reports to find data on solicitations in regard to preferences. By using this functionality in WEBS, agencies and DES can track solicitations and awards that have included environmental purchasing preferences.

4. **Question:** **[How does a bidder use the ChemForward website to be eligible to obtain the policy’s purchasing preference for supplying and/or using products and product packaging that does not contain PCBs?](#)**

**Answer:** To verify that paints or printing inks products bid do not contain inadvertently manufactured PCBs (iPCBs) from the ChemForward website, and to be eligible for the preference, bidders must do the following:

- Go to the website iPCB Pigment Resource Tool — ChemForward, [www.chemforward.org/ipcb-pigment-resource-tool](http://www.chemforward.org/ipcb-pigment-resource-tool). This resource is a free searchable dataset of nearly 400 pigments organized by chemical name, CAS#, color, and presence of chlorine. The tool can be used to find alternatives products which do not contain inadvertently manufactured PCBs (iPCBs).
- On the far-left column of the table located on the website, look up the pigment name that is used in the product bid. If you do not know the name of the pigment for the product bid, check with the manufacturer.
- Go to the right side of the table and find the “Contains Chlorine” column. Pigments which do not contain chlorine will be marked “No.” Pigments which do not have chlorine in their molecular structure are unlikely to contain iPCBs generated during manufacturing.
- If the website shows that you are using or supplying products in the product bid that do not contain chlorine (these products will be marked as “No” in the contains chlorine column), you *are eligible* for the purchasing preference in the policy. If the website shows that you are using products in the product bid which contain chlorine, you are *not eligible* for the purchasing preference.
- To Verify that you are eligible for the purchasing preference:
  - Save the website page that shows your product(s) do not contain chlorine in a digital PDF format.
  - Attach the PDF to the DES PCB Certification document found on the Enterprise Services PCB Preference in the Procurement Desk Aid located at: [PCB Preference in Procurement Desk Aid \(wa.gov\)](#)
  - Submit the digital PDF from the ChemForward website and the DES PCB Certification with your bid.