

# Association of Registered Graphic Designer of Ontario Environmental Paper Policy

## 1 Our Beliefs

- 1.1 The Association of Registered Graphic Designers of Ontario (RGD Ontario) is aware of the impacts of our actions and those of our members on our climate and natural world.
- 1.2 We are also conscious of our role and responsibilities as stewards of the world's remaining ecologically sensitive areas and the important role we must play as advocates for forest conservation and leaders in environmental and sustainability issues.
- 1.3 We believe paper and printing have a legitimate and acceptable role in the communication of business marketing and design activities and that it is our responsibility to ensure that these activities are undertaken in the most sustainable way possible.
- 1.4 As the largest member based professional graphic design association in Canada, RGD is committed to environmental leadership and to encouraging graphic designers to lead the business and design communities on issues of sustainability.
- 1.5 Therefore,
  - 1.5.1 We believe that people, the economy, and the health of our planet are inextricably linked; that by balancing profitability and environmental and social objectives, we minimize risks, seize new opportunities and in many instances, realize collective gains.
  - 1.5.2 We believe we must lead the search for innovative ways to safeguard the natural environment seeking solutions to environmental challenges in our daily activities, our relationships, and through services for our members.
  - 1.5.3 As a member based Association, RGD Ontario has the dual role of minimizing our own environmental footprint as well as assisting and enabling our members to reduce theirs.

## 2 Guiding Principles

Our actions are guided by these six principles:

- 2.1 Minimize the Use of Resources.  
Address the serious nature of global climate change by reducing our carbon footprint. We will attempt to mitigate the impact of our actions and those of our members by advocating the wise use of resources, by:
  - 2.1.1 Conserving natural resources,
  - 2.1.2 Minimizing environmental impacts such as pollution and use of water and energy,
  - 2.1.3 Supporting strong recycling programs,
  - 2.1.4 Reducing materials that must be disposed of in landfills.

- 2.2** Promote Environmentally Responsible Business Activities.  
RGD Ontario believes that it is a 'best practice' to increase the use and availability of products that help protect the environment by:
  - 2.2.1 Identifying environmentally preferable products and distribution systems,
  - 2.2.2 Preferring suppliers and sponsors who reduce the environmental impact of their production and distribution systems,
  - 2.2.3 Creating a model for effectively and successfully specifying environmentally preferable products and encouraging RGD Ontario members to adopt similar goals.
  
- 2.3** Take a Leadership Position on Sustainability and be a Strong Advocate for Sustainability Education.  
At the Nov 19, 2008, meeting of the RGD Ontario Board, the Board voted to endorse the Sustainable Design Charter created by the Design Industry Advisory Committee (DIAC). In part, this committed the Association to:
  - 2.3.1 Raise awareness of the critical role that designers play in creating a sustainable Ontario;
  - 2.3.2 Model the principles and best practices of sustainability in professional practice and in design education;
  - 2.3.3 Empower Ontario's design workforce to help all clients reduce negative environmental impacts; and,
  - 2.3.4 Develop Design for Sustainability research initiatives with DIAC colleagues in partnership with industry, government and education.
  
- 2.4** Act with complete Openness and Transparency.  
RGD Ontario will prioritize the use of sponsors, suppliers and companies who provide more information about the environmental characteristics of their products and the sustainability of production and extraction. We will communicate our sustainable choices in an open, honest and transparent manner to the membership.
  
- 2.5** Incorporate Environmental Accountability into Our Actions.  
RGD Ontario will act responsibly by maintaining solid governance principles and oversight systems to monitor compliance, while managing the Association's business with transparency and integrity.
  
- 2.6** Communicate Sustainability to the Membership and the Business Communities.  
As defined in our beliefs, RGD Ontario will take the leadership position in bringing the sustainability message to our stakeholders. RGD Ontario will review our environmental impacts regularly and continually work to reduce them; and will strive to establish benchmarks, verification and reporting processes on targets and commitments.

### **3 Specific Actions**

- 3.1** This Environmental Paper Procurement Policy for RGD Ontario does not only mandate specific behaviours, but also establishes preference guidelines in order to assist the Association to make the most sustainable paper procurement decisions possible without compromising effectiveness or economy.
  
- 3.2** RGD Ontario believes that its commitment to ensure that its papers derive from ecologically sustainable sources can be implemented in harmony with the necessity to source its papers according to price, availability and product quality.

- 3.3** Therefore, RGD Ontario is committed where price and availability allow, to the following specific actions for its environmental paper procurement policy:
- 3.3.1 RGD Ontario is aware of the potential impacts of paper production and consumption on the planet and the world's remaining forest ecosystems, and is concerned about forest conservation. RGD Ontario will work to ensure that paper products do not originate from forests with globally, nationally, or regionally significant concentrations of biodiversity or from forest regions that are in or contain rare, threatened, or endangered ecosystems. RGD Ontario will not procure paper that originates from forests harvested in an environmentally unsustainable manner.
  - 3.3.2 RGD Ontario prefers Ancient Forest Friendly papers. RGD will use reasonable efforts to influence their supply chain to use environmentally responsible practices.
  - 3.3.3 RGD Ontario will specify paper with a minimum of 10% Post Consumer Waste recycled content and will give preferential treatment to suppliers whose products maximize the Post Consumer Waste recycled content.
  - 3.3.4 RGD is committed to increasing the amount of certified fibre in its paper and will demonstrate preference for paper containing wood fibre certified by independent, third party certification schemes.
  - 3.3.5 RGD Ontario will designate FSC certified wood fibre as the preferred option, recognizing that this is the most broadly endorsed standard by global environmental NGOs. Other certification systems recognized by RGD Ontario include:
    - The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI certification) which tends to represent more private / independent woodlots in North America;
    - Ecologo, founded in 1988 by the Government of Canada but now recognized worldwide, is North America's largest respected environmental standard and certification mark. The EcoLogo Program is a Type I eco label, as defined by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO);
    - PEFC, having endorsed 23 national programs developed and supported by 149 governments and accounting for 85% of the world's forests. RGD Ontario intends to promote the FSC/SFI/PEFC and EcoLogo labels and certification, as they are applicable in our communications materials.
  - 3.3.6 RGD Ontario will work with our print suppliers to ensure that all printers supplying RGD Ontario communications are FSC certified.
  - 3.3.7 In all cases except those rare occasions where it is not feasible, RGD Ontario communications materials printed on FSC certified paper by an FSC certified printer will carry the FSC label.
  - 3.3.8 RGD Ontario will work to ensure that all Association communications materials produced by or on behalf of RGD Ontario will integrate environmental criteria into all design processes and conform to the best practices of design for the environment, ensuring that they maximize the efficient use of resources and minimize waste.
  - 3.3.9 In keeping with our guiding principles of transparency, accountability and sustainability, RGD Ontario communications will, in all instances except rare occasions when it is not feasible, specify the environmental best practices that have been employed in their production.
  - 3.3.10 RGD Ontario will encourage all paper suppliers to eliminate the production of persistent organic and inorganic pollutants from within its product supply chain.

- 3.3.11 RGD Ontario will give preference to papers that are bleached without the use of chlorine or chlorine compounds.
- 3.3.12 RGD Ontario will use the minimum amount of paper necessary for effective communications and will attempt to minimize overall fibre consumption by implementing and expanding sustainable design, printing and distribution processes.
- 3.3.13 RGD Ontario will give preference to papers, products and services manufactured by companies which provide full, transparent, and verifiable information regarding the environmental impact of their production and processes.
- 3.3.14 RGD Ontario commits to working with members, sponsors, nongovernmental organizations, and other stakeholders to protect endangered forests, improve forest management and production practices, and reduce demands on forests.
- 3.3.15 RGD Ontario will review the environmental impacts of our activities regularly and continually work to reduce them and will strive to establish benchmarks, targets and commitments along with appropriate verification and reporting standards.

## **4 Implementation**

- 4.1** RGD Ontario recognizes that, in this area, best practices, processes and technologies are evolving rapidly. This policy is a living document that will evolve significantly over time.
- 4.2** At minimum, this policy will be reviewed by the RGD Ontario Board of Directors on an annual basis to ensure its continued relevance, practicality and leadership.
- 4.3** In consultation with and with the support of the RGD Ontario Sustainability Committee, as mandated by the RGD Board, it will be the responsibility of RGD Ontario staff, particularly the Executive Director and Creative Director, to implement this policy on a day to day basis.