



MEMORANDUM

TO: All TxDOT Employees **DATE:** October 18, 2000
FROM: Charles W. Heald, P.E. *Charles W. Heald*
SUBJECT: Preference for 1st Choice Product Purchasing

Each fiscal year, in coordination with the Texas Recycling Market Development Board (RMDB), the General Services Commission (GSC) designates certain recycled, remanufactured or environmentally sensitive commodities or services as **1st Choice**. Members of RMDB include the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC), the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the Texas General Land Office (GLO), the Texas Department of Economic Development (TDED), and GSC.

For fiscal year 2001, RMDB recommended that GSC adopt the following recycled-content commodities as **1st Choice** products for Texas state agencies:

1. Re-refined oils and lubricants;
2. Recycled-content toilet paper, toilet seat covers, and paper towels; and
3. Recycled-content printing, computer and copier paper, and business envelopes.

A current listing of commodity codes for these **1st Choice** products can be found at <http://www.dot.state.tx.us/insdtdot/orgchart/gsd/recycle/default.htm> on the GSD TxDOT Recycling Program web site.

The purpose of this action was to use the purchasing power of the state to stimulate markets for recyclable materials by favoring products made from components previously found in the waste stream. These products were chosen for several reasons. RMDB staff determined from extensive research that these designated products are generally available in sufficient quantities to meet demand, meet appropriate performance requirements, and are priced competitively with their non-recycled content alternatives. The RMDB has also indicated that it will continue to add additional products to this list of **1st Choice** procurement products on an annual basis.

Effective September 1, 2000, all TxDOT divisions, district offices, and area offices will comply with this legislative mandate on any and all future purchases of these designated products. Any purchase order of a commodity or service that accomplishes the same purpose (that is, a virgin alternative) as a **1st Choice** commodity or service identified above, must be submitted with a written justification and request for purchase approval to me prior to issuing the purchase order. This justification and request must also state the reasons for the determination that the **1st Choice** commodity or service will not meet the requirements of our

agency. See the TxDOT Procurement Manual, Purchasing Policies, Recycled and Remanufactured Products, for specifics.

While this mandate appears new to many of you, this is not the first time that TxDOT has embarked upon such a program. As many of you will recall, the Texas Transportation Commission, in support of department recycling initiatives, issued Minute Order 107593 on August 26, 1998 encouraging the department to 1) purchase recycled products whenever such products are available, meet performance specifications, and compete favorably with regard to cost; and 2) join with the other member agencies of RMDB in exclusively purchasing the previously informally designated products above.

In addition to purchasing these 1st Choice products, I am also encouraging you to continue to purchase other recycled, remanufactured, and environmentally sensitive products. Although TxDOT has experienced significant success in following department recycling initiatives, there is still opportunity available for additional gains.

In many instances, buying recycled products is the smart choice. These products are good quality, cost effective, and good for the environment. It is my intention that all TxDOT personnel fully comply with the 1st Choice legislative mandate and TxDOT's recycled product purchasing policy.

If you have any questions regarding either this law or our internal policy, please contact Rebecca Davio, TxDOT Recycling Manager at (512) 416-2086.