



Board of County Commissioners
Office of Purchasing
Title: Standardization and Specifications

Effective Date: 12/20/96 Supersedes Date:

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GENERAL:

An essential ingredient of a comprehensive purchasing program is that certain commodities be standardized and that such standardized commodities be purchased in accord with carefully drawn specifications.

Standardization takes advantage of low prices which may result from buying in bulk. It also lowers the administrative cost of purchasing by reducing the total number of purchases made. Purchasing attempts to minimize the number of different kinds of items bought through standardization.

Purchasing does not attempt to force, but encourage, departments to establish standards wherever and whenever possible.

Standards assistance is available from many sources, including the Office of Purchasing. Others include:

1. The State of Florida
2. GSA (the purchasing arm of the USA)
3. American National Standards Institute, Inc. (ANSI)
4. ASTM
5. Underwriter's Laboratories
6. Department of Transportation

One prime example of standardization is telecommunications - Motorola.

DEFINITION:

Specifications are a clear and complete description of essential qualities products necessary to meet the acceptable purchase requirements. A vendor must meet or exceed specification requirements if his goods or services are to be considered for purchase. Specifications may be in the form of written descriptions, drawings, commercial designations, industry standards or other descriptive references. Specifications become an integral part of the purchase order or contract.

Specifications should NOT require materials of a better quality than actually needed. Yet, they should prescribe the methods of inspection and testing which will govern the acceptance or rejection of any ordered materials or equipment.



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Well defined specifications are required if the objectives of economy and efficiency are to be achieved. They help to insure that maximum value is obtained for the public funds expended.

Other benefits are:

1. All qualified suppliers, large or small, are able to compete on equal basis.
2. Disputes about whether a delivered product is what was ordered are minimized.
3. It is much easier to make cost-saving cooperative purchases with other units of government commonly accepted specifications are used.

PREPARATION OF SPECIFICATIONS:

The Road Operations Division prepares specifications for rolling stock and other machinery which are submitted to the Office of Purchasing and the user department division for approval before sealed bids are let.

Outside architects, engineers and consultants prepare specifications for construction projects.

The Office of Purchasing relies upon State of Florida specifications for such items as concrete, asphalt and items purchased from State contracts.

Individual departments may consult with reputable vendors for technical assistance. This method should be viewed with some reservation because competition can be precluded or quality diminished. Proposals of competing firms must be compared. BEWARE of specifying patented or sole source items.

The following items should be remembered in writing specifications:

Use specification writing assistance whenever possible. (The Office of Purchasing can provide information as to where such information is available, if such data is not already in the Purchasing records.)

Keep specifications clear, concise, and accurate.

Update specifications regularly to reflect changes in technology.

Avoid the use of unfair specifications which preclude or reduce competition.

Most specifications can be classified into six categories.

Five are based on design features, one on performance. For their relative merit and characteristics, see the following:



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Specifications

Merit

Characteristics

Acceptable:

Open

Covers all pertinent features. May incorporate words or phrases from industrial or governmental standard specifications. No specific brands mentioned.

By reference to
Industrial or
Governmental
Standards

Specifies the product should meet certain widely accepted standards.

Performance

Specifies performance requirements.

Unacceptable:

Single Product
trade

Designates only one manufacturer, brand or name. Denies competition.

Equal Product

Names a specific brand, and approves any other brand which can be proved equal to the one specified. Opens the way to controversy as to what is "equal."

Multi-Product

Names two or more specific products. Often can unfairly limit competition.



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EXAMPLE OF TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS:

TURF SPRAYER/TRAILER MOUNTED

PUMP: 1. Positive displacement piston diaphragm spray pump designed to handle all normal spray chemicals including wettable powered types.

2. Max. GPM - 14.0, Max. PSI - 500

TANK: 1 . 300 gallon capacity.
2. Tank lid shall be constructed of chemical resistant non-corrosive fiberglass.
3. Lid shall be hinged to tank.
4. Lid latch shall be a can lock lid latch to assure maximum sealing of lid gasket to prevent chemical spillage.
5. Tank shall have mechanical agitation with stainless steel shaft and paddles.
6. Tank shall be equipped with an externally mounted liquid level sight tube.

ENGINE: Eight (8) hp Kohler cast iron gasoline engine with electric start.

TRAILER FRAME: Constructed from high strength formed steel with full length saddle supporting bottom of fiberglass tank.

RUNNING GEAR: Draw bar with crank case and axle assembly with high flotation tires. Tire size - 1 1 L x 15

SPRAY BOOM: 21' stainless steel spray boom with no drip nozzles. (Boom shall be chain supported when extended.)

HOSE REEL: Rear mounted electric hose reel equipped with 100' of 1/2" hose and green guard JD9-C pistol grip spray gun.

SUCTION LINE & TANK DRAIN ASSEMBLY: 1. Suction lines shall have brass gate valves.
2. Large capacity line strainers and tank drain plugs shall be located at the front of the sprayer inside the frame area.

GAUGES: Unit shall be equipped with one (1) glycerin filled pressure gauge.
SPRAY CONTROL VALVE: Spray control valve for boom shall be mounted on the right side of tank frame.