

# Purchasing Policies and Procedures (Administrative Regulations)

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## SECTION 7: SPECIFICATIONS

Date: 03/2009

It is the responsibility of each department to provide detailed, accurate specifications when requisitioning supplies and services. Accurate specifications are essential for effective bidding. Therefore, specifications should be clear and accurate descriptions of the material or services required.

### 7-1. **Standardization**

Standardization of specifications for items common to several divisions facilitates quantity buying and generally makes possible reduced prices since common specifications enable Purchasing to place larger orders. The Purchasing Division and operating departments should work together in the establishment of standard specifications for articles in common use.

### 7-2. **"Or Approved Equal"**

When brand names are specified, the words "or approved equal" should be added unless compelling reasons make only a single brand acceptable, in which case a written justification must be signed by the department head and forwarded with the requisition to the Purchasing Division.

Use of a brand name for "approved equal to" specifications should be for the purpose of describing the standard of quality, performance, and characteristics the City desires and not be intended to limit or restrict competition. Use of "approved equal to" specifications should, whenever possible, identify a minimum of two (2) brand names as approved equals.

Using specifications provided by a specific manufacturer should be avoided and if used, the name of the manufacturer, model number, etc., should be indicated. It should also be stated that use of the manufacturer's specifications are for the sole purpose of establishing an "approved equal to" criteria. The City reserves the right to determine and approve any other as being equal or acceptable when specifications designate "or approved equal".

### 7-3. **Vendor Assistance in Writing Specifications**

There may be occasions when vendor assistance may be required in developing specifications. Such specifications should be written in general terms and the vendor should be clearly informed that the information provided may be used in developing specifications for a competitive bidding process. Purchasing should also be advised if a vendor has directly helped you develop your specifications.

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## 7-4. **Review of Specifications**

It is the responsibility of Purchasing to assure that specifications are complete and accurate. Purchasing will review for completeness of information, terms and conditions, insurance coverage, and open and competitive language. To assure bid/proposal specifications and terms meet City needs, Purchasing may request specifications be reviewed by pertinent City staff prior to requesting bids/proposals (i.e. City Attorney, Engineering, etc.)