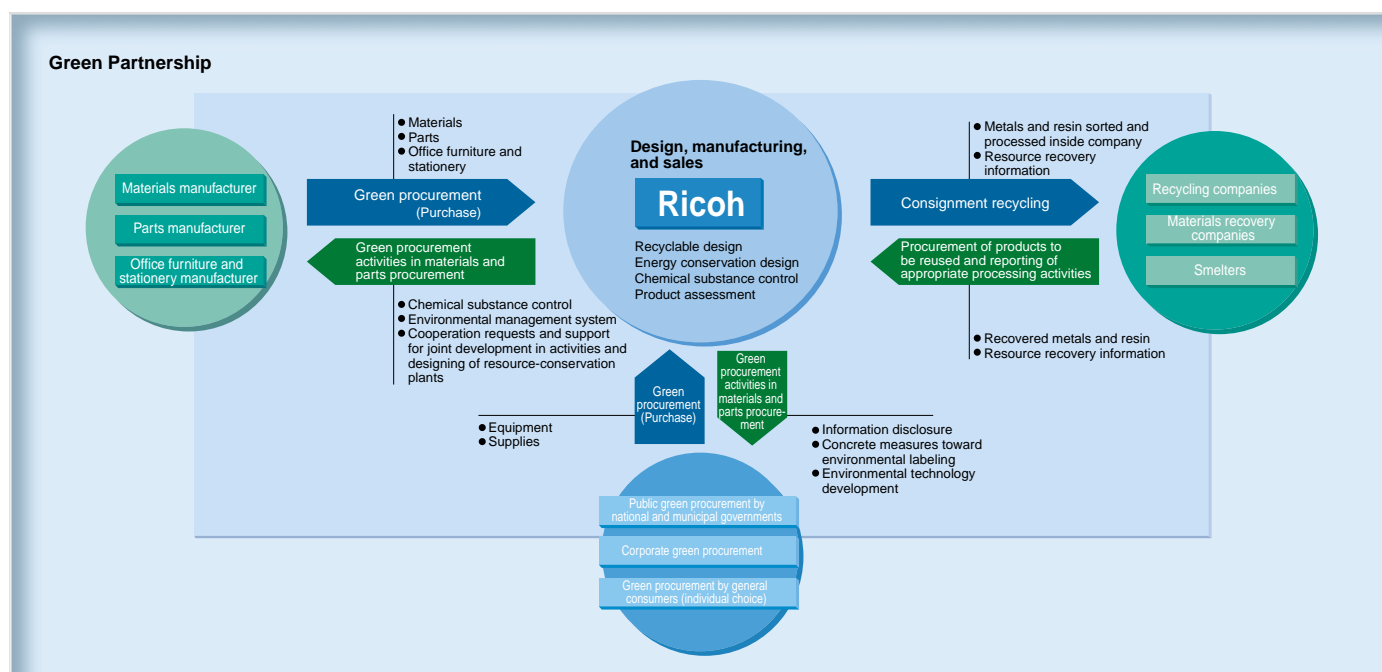
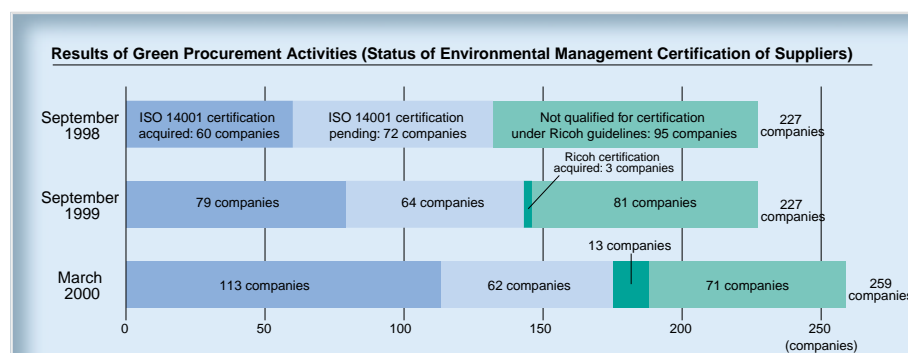


Green Partnership



◎ Concept of Green Partnership

To reduce environmental impact in all corporate activities, it is important to purchase materials that have minimum environmental impact, use manufacturing techniques that minimize environmental impact, and sell products that have minimum environmental impact. The Ricoh Group views materials suppliers, customers, and contracted recycling companies as green partners and hopes to, with their help, minimize the environmental impact produced by business sites by carefully choosing the materials to be purchased and developing and marketing environmentally conscious products. In addition, we are aiming at effective environmental management by reducing the overall environmental impact and total costs.



Green Procurement of Materials

To ensure that both procured materials and the plants where they were manufactured have less environmental impact, the Ricoh Group issued its *Green Procurement Guidelines* in 1998. We asked suppliers to cooperate by either following the conditions laid out in the guidelines or by acquiring ISO 14001 certification. Rather than merely asking to observe its guidelines, Ricoh sends its internal auditors to suppliers to give advice and inspections free of charge. Because we work with a number of partner companies, it is important to disclose and share information and know-how so that our environmental activities will lead to higher economic benefits. Ricoh shares its technologies with suppliers through its *Green Pro-*

curement News as well as through demonstrations at some of its successful zero waste plants*.

* See page 44.

Guidelines for Packaging Materials

The Ricoh Chemical Industry Division issued the *Green Procurement Guidebook*. This easy-to-understand guidebook contains many examples on packaging that uses fewer materials as well as packaging that is more environment-friendly, such as using recyclable drums instead of 18-liter containers, which are difficult to recycle.



Supporting Partner Companies

Green Procurement of Office Consumables and Supplies

Ricoh Aoyama, Ricoh Omori, and Ricoh Ginza, which are all located in metropolitan areas, drafted a "green procurement list" for office automation (OA) equipment, office supplies, stationery, sales promotion giveaways, and gifts. The three business sites promote efficient green procurement activities with the use of the computerized ordering system they established. Ricoh is planning to adopt this system nationwide.

Ricoh Unitechno established a Green Supplies section, which is connected online to suppliers. Ricoh Unitechno's inventory is automatically checked and restocked when needed, thereby eliminating the need to fill out order forms and wasting paper.



Green Supplies section at Ricoh Unitechno

Green Marketing

The Ricoh Group markets products worldwide that have less environmental impact and are certified with such Type I Environment Labels* as the Eco Mark, Blue Angel Mark (BAM), and Nordic Swan Mark. In order to incorporate Type I Environment Label standards into general design activities, we added Type I labeling requirements to our internal design standards and began activities that would ensure that all our copiers would pass these requirements.

* Labels certifying that the environmental conservation requirements established by a third party for marketed products have been satisfied. See pages 35–36 for approaches the Ricoh Group takes.

Environmental Impact Disclosure of Products

Disclosing environmental impact information to customers so that they will be able to choose products with less environmental impact is also important. The Ricoh Group was the first in disclosing product LCA information in Type III Environmental Impact Disclosure*. The product information we disclose to the government for its procurement list and to green procurement network is highly detailed.

* See page 35.

The Ricoh Group believes in the importance of supporting its partner companies in reducing environmental impact and not just imposing conditions for green procurement. Through the Group's activities, suppliers learn that "environmental improvement means cost reduction", and as a result, we succeeded in improving management systems, reducing costs, and improving management people and employees' awareness of environmental conservation.

More than ¥15 Million in Cost Reduction and Less Overtime (Shizukoh Industry)

Shizukoh Industry Co., Ltd. in Numazu City, has 70 employees and manufactures such plastic parts as toner bottles. It achieved zero waste in June 1999 by doing more than just complying with guidelines.

Shizukoh Industry President Mitsuhiro Aiyoshi said, "I knew Ricoh was enthusiastic about environmental conservation. Our environmental conscious products had to match Ricoh's in quality. All our employees worked together to come up with ideas for quality improvement and environmental conservation measures. Shizukoh Industry is located in the same area as Ricoh Numazu, which is conven-



ient for us if we need to ask them anything. Ricoh provided us with legal advice and directed plastic recycling companies our way, and we successfully established our system in a single year. Such environmental conservation activities as not dumping waste outside the plant helped us to become more socially responsible. Additionally, we were able to define what our ideal plant was."

In the past, Shizukoh Industry used an estimation-based production system, in which it kept its assembly lines in continuous operation and stored the finished products. Currently, however, Shizukoh Industry uses a planned production system that does not require too many finished products to be held, realizing a cost reduction of more than ¥15 million from the previous year. Without having employees work much overtime, it was successful in establishing a comfortable work environment and getting more ideas for system improvement.

ISO 14001 Acquired Thanks to the Participation of all Employees (Suzuko Co., Ltd.)

Suzuko Co., Ltd., in Kawasaki City, has approximately 80 employees and manufactures stamped parts. Taking advantage of Ricoh's green procurement approach, Suzuko has now acquired ISO 14001 certification.

Suzuko President Bunichi Watanabe, recalling his company's history, said, "Our mechanics are generally older than those in other companies, and they seem to have a little difficulty getting used to environmental management systems like ISO 14001. I thought this would be a good opportunity to raise everyone's awareness to the same level. Even I, at first, could not relate environmental conservation activities with cost reduction. Everything became clear after we assigned monetary value to energy conservation effects. When we began posting our achievements on the company bulletin board in terms of how much money was saved the month before, all our employees became aware of the relationship between environmental improvement and cost reduction." As a stamped parts manufacturer, the company is quite adept at developing devices that prevent pollution and are resistant to vibrations, such as oil catchers. The company acquired ISO 14001 certification in August 1999. Even the managers and section chiefs are now able to review the environmental impact evaluation to renew the company's certification.

