



STANDARDS, CERTIFICATIONS & RECOGNITION

Third-party standards and certification and/or recognition programs play a very important role in the green marketplace. As the number of green cleaning products has grown by leaps and bounds, purchasers are faced with plethora of choices and therefore have difficulty in selecting green products. Third-party standards simply help purchasers readily identify environmentally preferable cleaning products with a reasonable level of assurance.

Below is a brief description of the major standards and third-party organizations that provide certification and/or recognition that a particular product possesses a preferred environmental and health and safety profile.

Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI)

CRI is a non profit trade association representing the manufacturers of more than 95 percent of all carpet made in the United States, as well as their suppliers and service providers. Relating to the cleaning industry, CRI has a green label vacuum cleaner program and also operates the seal of approval program for carpet extractors.

CleanGredients

CleanGredients is an online database of institutional and industrial cleaning product ingredient chemicals, providing verified information about the environmental and human-health attributes of listed ingredients. CleanGredients is designed to help formulators identify better ingredients as well as provide suppliers a venue to showcase ingredients with a preferred environmental safety and health profile. CleanGredients was initiated by the U.S. EPA Design for the Environment Formulator Program and is now managed by GreenBlue.

EPA Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines

The Comprehensive Procurement Guideline (CPG) program is part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) continuing effort to promote the use of materials recovered from solid waste. Buying recycled-content products ensures that the materials collected in recycling programs will be used again in the manufacture of new products. The CPG program addresses a number of products in the cleaning industry including, but not limited to, jansan paper products, recycling containers, and plastic trash bags.

Environmental Choice EcoLogo

Operated under Environment Canada's Environmental Choice, the EcoLogo program is highly respected and established North American multi-attribute environmental-standard and certification program. The EcoLogo program provides standards and certification for a wide variety of cleaning and janitorial products such as bathroom cleaners, carpet cleaners, drain/grease trap additives, floor care products, hand cleaners, and jansan paper products.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Design for the Environment (DfE) Formulator Program

By forming partnerships with DfE Program, formulators can take part in an important national effort to improve the human health and environmental profile of a variety of chemical-based cleaning products, which will benefit the quality of aquatic life and the environment, the biodegradability of waste streams, and human health and safety. DfE can provide formulators with information on chemical characteristics and toxicities of raw materials and additives, safer substitutes for chemicals of concern, and innovative new chemistries.

GREENGUARD Environmental Institute Indoor Air Quality Certification Program

GREENGUARD Environmental Institute (GEI) has established performance-based standards to define products with low chemical and particle emissions for use indoors, including cleaning and maintenance products. The standard establishes certification procedures, including test methods, allowable emissions levels, product sample collection and handling, testing type and frequency, and program application processes and acceptance.

Green Seal

Established as a non profit organization, Green Seal provides environmental standards and certification for a wide variety of cleaning products including bathroom cleaners, carpet cleaners, general purpose cleaners, glass cleaners, hand soaps, floor care products, and a variety of jansan paper products. Green Seal has also established a standard and certification process for environmentally preferable cleaning services.

ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard

ISSA is the worldwide cleaning industry association, representing more than 5,500 distributor, manufacturer, building service contractor, and in-house service provider companies. The ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS) is a management framework designed to help building service contractors and in-house service providers develop quality, customer-centered organizations that are based on universally accepted principles that are the hallmark of well-managed successful cleaning operations.

United States Green Building Council (USGBC)

The USGBC Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Existing Buildings (LEED-EB) rating system maximizes building operational efficiency while minimizing environmental impacts. It is a recognized, performance-based benchmark for building owners and operators to measure operations, improvements, and maintenance on a consistent scale. LEED-EB is designed for delivering economically profitable, environmentally responsible, healthy, and productive places to live and work.

