



**The Mark of  
Environmental  
Responsibility**

# **Environmentally Preferable Cleaning Products**

**Cheryl Baldwin  
Green Seal, Inc.**

- **Environmental and health consideration of cleaning products**
- **Identify and find environmentally preferable cleaning products**





*Green Seal is an independent, nonprofit organization that uses science-based standards and the power of the marketplace to create a more sustainable world.*

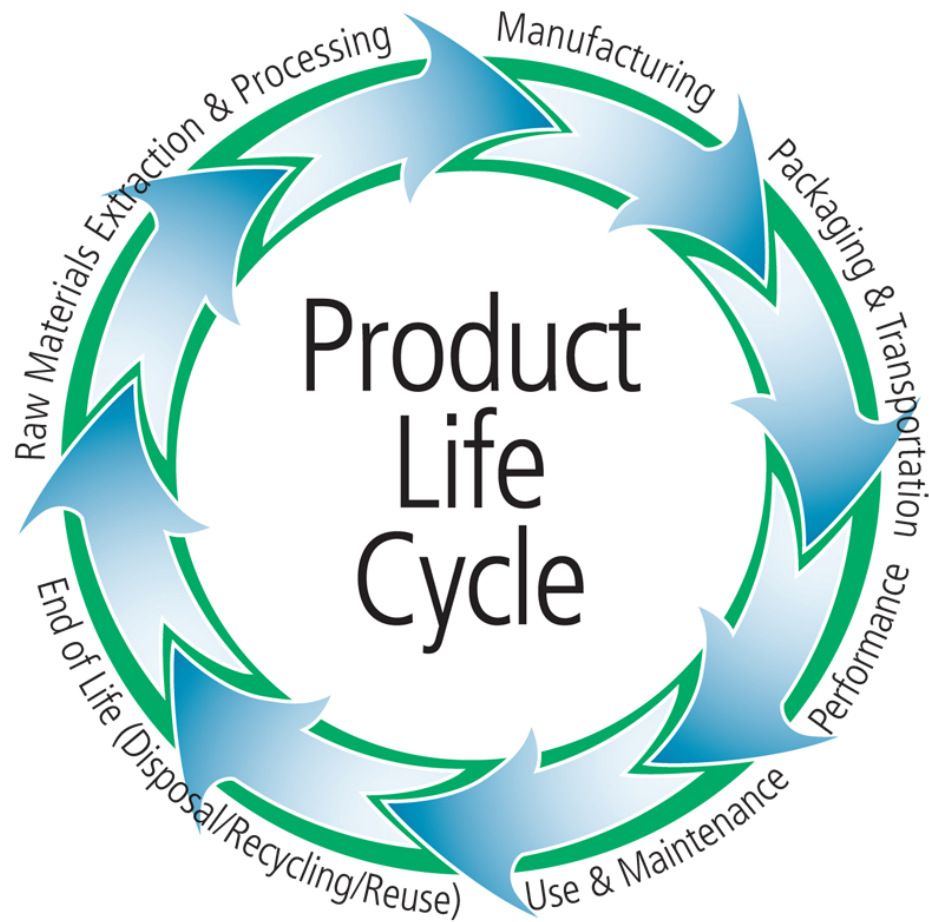


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- The original Green Seal of Approval for 20 yrs
- 501(c)(3) non-profit, independent
- Mission driven, science-based
- Certification based on standards with multiple criteria (life-cycle approach)
- Meets ANSI, EPA, ISO, GEN, Consumers Union





# Rising Life Cycle Considerations for Cleaning Products

- General health hazards
- Inhalation exposure
- Fragrances
- Packaging
- Performance
- Footprint



# Identifying Environmentally Preferable Cleaning Product Options

- CA: “...cannot contain carcinogens, mutagens, reproductive toxins, ingredients that cause asthma, heavy metals, including lead, hexavalent chromium, or selenium, either in elemental form or compounds, 2-butoxyethanol, alkylphenol ethoxylates, phthalates, ozone-depleting chemicals, or optical brighteners. The standards also establish specific limits on ingredients for acute toxicity, skin and eye corrosivity, skin absorption, volatile organic compound content, inhalation toxicity, toxicity to aquatic life, bioaccumulating compounds, biodegradability, eutrophication, combustibility, and fragrances. The standards define requirements for concentrates, dispensing systems, packaging, packaging source reduction, labeling, and training.”



# How to Find Environmentally Preferable Cleaning Products

## ➤ Look to Third Party Ecolabel Programs

Responsible Purchasing Network:

[http://www.responsiblepurchasing.org/purchasing\\_guides/cleaners/specs/](http://www.responsiblepurchasing.org/purchasing_guides/cleaners/specs/)

CA AB821: "Third-party certification" means certification by an established, independent, nationally recognized program developed for the purpose of identifying environmentally preferable products and that meets, at a minimum all of the following criteria:

- (1) Has an open, transparent, and public process for setting standards that involves key stakeholders.
- (2) Clearly defines the fees a manufacturer must pay for certification.
- (3) Clearly avoids conflicts of interest in the standard setting and product evaluation process.
- (4) Have the criteria and standards for certification published and publicly available and easily accessible to purchasers, manufacturers, and the general public, such as through the program's Internet website, and include a list of certified products that meet the standards.
- (5) Bases certification of the product and its packaging on criteria for reducing effects on human health and safety, ecological toxicity, other environmental impacts, and resource conservation



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# Guidelines for Ecolabel Programs

- ISO 14020 Environmental labels and declarations
- ISO 14024 Type I Environmental labelling
- Global Ecolabelling Network membership criteria
- EPA 3rd-Party Guidance criteria
- Consumers Union criteria
- FTC Environmental Marketing Guidelines



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# How to Find Environmentally Preferable Cleaning Products

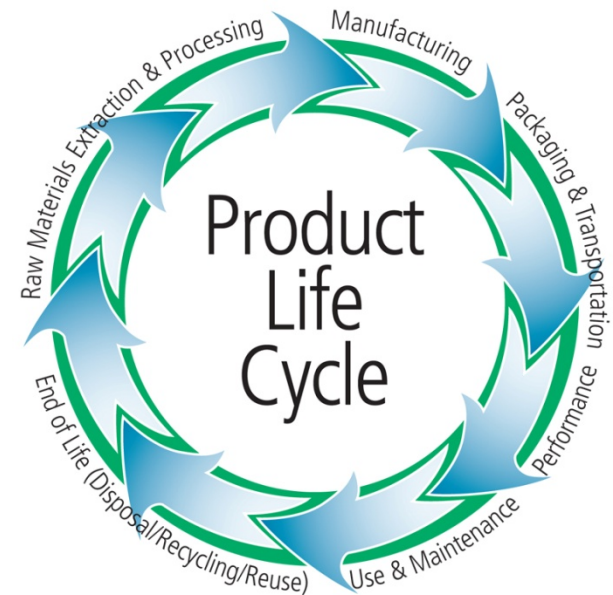
- Look to Third Party Ecolabel Programs



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# Rising Life Cycle Considerations for Janitorial Paper Products

- Source reduction
- Manufacturing:
  - Energy/GHG
  - Water
  - Pollution Prevention
- Distribution



# Identifying Environmentally Preferable Janitorial Paper Options

- EPA CPG:

PAPER PRODUCT	NOTES	POST-CONSUMER RECOVERED FIBER	TOTAL RECOVERED FIBER
<b>Newsprint</b>			
Newsprint	Groundwood paper used in newspaper	20–85%	20–100%
<b>Commercial Sanitary Tissue Products</b>			
Bathroom Tissue	Used in rolls or sheets	20–60%	20–100%
Paper Towels	Used in rolls or sheets	40–60%	40–100%
Paper Napkins	Used in food service applications	30–60%	30–100%
Facial Tissue	Used for personal care	10–15%	10–100%
General-purpose Industrial Wipers	Used in cleaning and wiping applications	40%	40–100%



# How to Find Environmentally Preferable Janitorial Paper Products

- Look to Third Party Ecolabel Programs



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# GGHC References Green Seal

- **Environmental services: environmentally preferable cleaning (1.2-1.6)**
- **Environmentally preferable purchasing: toxic chemical reductions (3.1-3.5); office supplies (6.1)**
- **Food service (4.3)**



# Practice Greenhealth Recommends Green Seal Certified Cleaning Products



Memo

From: Beth Eckl, Practice GreenHealth  
Date: April 4, 2008  
Subject: Specifications for Cleaning Supplies

In response to your request, below are recommendations for one of the upcoming contracts, cleaning supplies. I have provided background information on the environmental issues involved with these products and our recommended specifications. I would be glad to discuss any of these elements with you.

#### Cleaning Supplies

**Background:** Adoption of environmentally preferable cleaning chemicals is important for many reasons:

**Worker health and safety:** Janitorial workers are one of the most likely worker classifications to suffer injuries on the job, primarily burns and blinding from caustic substances. One study found that 35% of conventional cleaning products can cause blindness, severe skin damage or damage to organs through the skin.

**Environmental damage:** Cleaning products that contain phosphorous are associated with algal blooms in water bodies that kill aquatic organisms. Some contain alkylphenol ethoxylate surfactants, which persist in the environment and are linked to hormone disruption in exposed organisms.

**Patient and staff comfort:** Many cleaning products contain high levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which can give rise to respiratory irritation, headaches and other symptoms.

**Long term health issues:** A surprising number of cleaning products contain known or probable carcinogens, and substances associated with reproductive organ damage, birth defects, kidney damage, neurological impacts and other serious health effects.

As the market for environmentally friendly cleaning products has expanded, many manufacturers make environmental claims that are difficult to verify or assess. Clearly, product review committees or contract staff would find it challenging to take on the immense burden of reviewing individual lab data on specific products to assess environmental impacts. Third party certification can provide assurance that a given product has been independently tested and found to meet a specific set of criteria which verifiably reduce its negative environmental and health impacts. It also ensures that a program of repeat certification and factory inspection is in place to ensure continuing compliance.

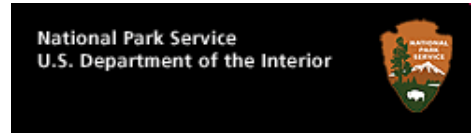
In the US, a nonprofit organization called Green Seal has established product standards for cleaning products based on a combination of performance specifications and environmental criteria. Their process is open, and includes feedback from health and environmental experts as well as manufacturers and end users. Green Seal has developed three standards for janitorial chemicals:

1. GS 37 standard for Industrial and Institutional Cleaners (including General-Purpose, Bathroom, Glass, and Carpet Cleaners).
2. GS 40 standard for Industrial and Institutional Floor-Care Products (Floor Finishes and Strippers), and
3. GS-41 standard for Industrial and Institutional Hand Soaps.

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# Green Seal is Referenced Widely

- Green Seal included in:
  - AASHE STARS, LEED, GGHC
  - Harvard, University of Miami
  - National Park Service, Department of Defense
  - State and local programs
  - Wal-Mart, World Bank, Aramark



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# **Green Cleaning Green Seal Standard, GS-42**

*High performance cleaning with the least  
impact to the environment and human health.*

**Building – Environment – Health**

**What & How**



# Thank You



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