



Environmentally Preferable Product Certifications to Look For



Biodegradable Products Institute is a non-profit organization that certifies products that will biodegrade in a commercial composting facility. Products must meet ASTM standards D6400 and /or ASTM D6868 that they will biodegrade quickly, completely and safely, leaving no synthetic residues. See <http://www.bpiworld.org/>.



Carpet and Rug Institute Green Label Plus is a program for carpet, carpet cushions and adhesives to help specifiers identify products with very low emissions of VOCs. (Note: this does not measure other chemicals of concern in these products so has limited value). See www.carpet-rug.org.



Electronic Products Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT) is a global rating system for greener electronics. Using EPEAT, purchasers can evaluate, compare and select electronics based on environmental attributes. EPEAT currently includes categories for PCS and Displays, Televisions, Imaging Equipment (printers, copiers, scanners, multifunction devices, fax machines and mailing machines), and Mobile Phones. New standards are being developed covering more categories of electronics. See www.epeat.net.



Energy Star, a joint program of the US Department of Energy and US Environmental Protection Agency, lists qualified energy-efficient products (such as lighting, exit signs, appliances and office equipment). See www.energystar.gov



UL ECOLOGO is part of UL Environment. UL ECOLOGO environmental product certification program sets standards for hundreds of product categories (including paper, paint, cleaners, office furniture, and building materials), and certifies products that meet them. Many products are sold in the U.S. although the program originated in Canada. See [UL ECOLOGO standard details](#) and [product database](#).



e-Stewards *e-Stewards* is a global program designed to enable individuals and organizations who dispose of their old electronics equipment to easily identify recyclers that adhere to the highest standard of environmental responsibility and worker protection. E-Steward certifies electronic recyclers who recycle in an environmentally responsible manner, including not sending electronics to developing countries, not landfilling or incinerating materials, and not using prison labor to recycle electronic parts. See www.e-stewards.org.



EPA WaterSense is a voluntary partnership program sponsored by the U.S. EPA is both a label for water efficient products and a resource for helping you save water. Find [WaterSense Products](#)



FSC *Forest Stewardship Council Chain of Custody (CoC) certification*. FSC promotes environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial and economically viable management of the world's forests. FSC CoC tracks FSC certified material through the production process to the consumer including all successive stages of processing, transformation, manufacturing and distribution. FSC on-product labels identify:



100% products only contain FSC certified forests



Mix Products with material from FSC certified forests, recycled material or other controlled sources.



Recycled Products contain postconsumer material and may include some preconsumer materials content. See www.fscus.org.



Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) – was developed with the aim to unify the various existing standards in the field of eco-textile processing and to define worldwide recognized requirements that ensure organic status of textiles, from harvesting of the raw materials, through environmentally and socially responsible manufacturing in order to provide a credible assurance to the end consumer. GOTS requires the use of certified organic fibers. See www.global-standard.org. Search product [database](#).



Green Seal is a nonprofit organization that sets standards through a multi-stakeholder, consensus-based process for products (such as janitorial cleaners, floor strippers, and paints) and services (including hotels and cleaning services) and certifies they meet those standards. See www.greenseal.org.



Green-e is a labeling program established by the nonprofit organization, Center for Resource Solutions, which verifies through its Green-e Energy label that electricity that has been generated using renewable sources such as solar and wind energy. See www.green-e.org.



UL GREENGUARD is part of UL Environment, a business unit of UL (Underwriters Laboratories). GREENGUARD certification helps manufacturers create - and buyers identify – interior products and materials that have low chemical emissions, improving the quality of the air in which the products are used. Certified products include flooring, paints, commercial

furniture, and cleaning products. Some labels reflect varying levels of impact on air quality. Prefer GREENGUARD “GOLD” for the lowest indoor air impacts. See www.greenguard.org.



Scientific Certification Systems is a private company that certifies a variety of green claims including “Recycled content,” “Organic” or low volatile organic compounds (VOCs). See www.scsglobalservices.com. Search various product categories in their [Green Products Guide](#).

FOOD CERTIFICATIONS:



Sustainable Food Definitions: Criteria Checklist – this resource lists over a dozen allowed Third Party certifications for food and allowed label claims prepared by Health Care Without Harm and Practice Greenhealth.

Other Environmental Purchasing Resources



US Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) developed the Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPG) that recommend minimum recycled-content levels for over 50 products, including copy paper, paper products, landscaping, and construction products. These guidelines are frequently cited on product labels. For more information, go to <http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/consERVE/tools/cpg/index.htm>. US EPA has also developed several tools to help facilitate EPP, <http://www.epa.gov/epp/>, including a database that provides specifications, purchasing guides, case studies and sample policies.

Practice Greenhealth offers environmentally preferable resources with some items available publicly.

See <https://practicegreenhealth.org/topics/epp>.