

Proposed Revisions to Criteria for PFAS



Revision Summary

Green Seal is proposing to prohibit the intentional use of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in Green Seal-certified product formulas. Green Seal has long restricted several well-known long-chain PFAS (typically containing 7 or more carbon atoms). However, a growing body of evidence indicates that short-chain PFAS have the same harmful health and environmental effects as the legacy PFAS they are replacing. As part of our precautionary approach, Green Seal is proposing to prohibit all approximately 12,000 PFAS in certified products.

Green Seal's efforts to prohibit PFAS is a multi-year, phased approach that intends to include PFAS prohibitions in all certified product formulas, and product packaging. Phase I of the project includes Cleaning and Personal Care Products.

Proposed Revisions Intended Outcomes

- To prevent adverse health impacts and pollution by encouraging manufacturers to eliminate PFAS from their supply chains
- To increase transparency for manufacturers, purchasers, and consumers by reviewing 100% of a product formula for PFAS

Research Record Summary

PFAS are a large group of man-made chemicals that all share a defining characteristic of carbon-fluorine chemical bonds. This unique chemical structure makes PFAS extremely stable, resistant to degradation, and useful in replying oils and water. As a result, PFAS have been used in a variety of industries to give products waterproof, greaseproof, and stainproof qualities, in addition to functioning as surfactants and friction reducers. Unfortunately, this unique chemical structure makes PFAS resistant to breaking down naturally, and as a result PFAS contamination has become widespread with levels found in human blood and the environment across the globe.

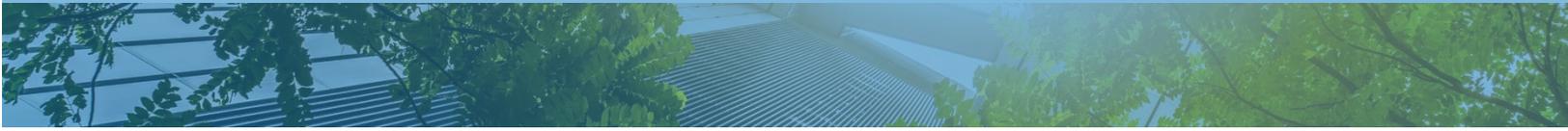
PFAS exposure has been associated with several adverse health outcomes such as impacts on the thyroid, increased risk of certain cancers, and decreased responses to vaccines. PFAS have been found to be especially detrimental to vulnerable populations such as children and people who are pregnant.

PFAS can be released to the environment throughout their life cycle including during production, use, and disposal from sites such as airports, military bases, landfills, water treatment plants in addition to the use of consumer products. Environmental contamination from PFAS has been widely documented in drinking water, in wildlife, and even in plants and food sources.

The use of PFAS in cleaning and personal care products is non-essential, i.e., not critical for effective functional performance, and safer functional alternatives are commercially available. Green Seal proposes to prohibit PFAS as a chemical class because of the expectation that chemicals in this class will behave similarly, their possibility for long-term repercussions, and the documented cases of regrettable substitutes.

A full research record is available for review in the Revision Proposal.

Green Seal develops standard revisions in an open and stakeholder engaged process in accordance with international best practices to ensure standards remain relevant, a reflection of good sustainability practices, and are feasible for multiple sizes of organizations | [Greenseal.org](https://www.greenseal.org)



Seeking Your Feedback

Green Seal is inviting feedback on this proposed revision. We are actively soliciting feedback from stakeholders including industry experts, public health researchers, product designers, raw material suppliers, Green Seal's comment period will remain open until January 22, 2022. To submit comments or schedule a conference call, contact us by email at standards@greenseal.org, or by phone at 202-872-6400.

PFAS Criteria Red-lined Proposed Revisions

Text in the boxes below show the details of the proposed revisions.

The **red text** shows proposed additions.

The text ~~with strikethrough lines~~ are proposed deletions.

The following Green Seal standards would be affected by the proposed revisions.

- GS-8 / GS-37 – Green Seal Standards for General Purpose Cleaners
- GS-41 / GS-44 – Green Seal Standards for Soaps, Hand Sanitizers, and Rinse-Off Products
- GS-48 / GS-51 – Green Seal Standards for Laundry Care Products
- GS-50 – Green Seal Standard for Personal Care and Cosmetic Products
- GS-52 / GS-53 – Green Seal Standards for Specialty Cleaners

Proposed Revision: Addition of PFAS Criteria and Accompanying Definitions

This text will be added to the product health and environmental requirements section of each standard. Applicable defined terms will be italicized in each standard.

Per- and Polyfluorinated Alkyl Substances (PFAS). The undiluted product shall not contain any ingredients or components that are Per- and Polyfluorinated Alkyl Substances (PFAS).

This text will be added or updated in the Definitions Annex of each standard.

ANNEX A - DEFINITIONS (Normative)

Per- and Polyfluorinated Alkyl Substances (PFAS). A class of fluorinated organic chemicals containing at least one fully fluorinated carbon atom. This includes but is not limited to PFAS identified via the US EPA's CompTox database PFAS Master List¹

¹ <https://comptox.epa.gov/dashboard/chemical-lists/PFASMASTER>

Additional revisions specific to the defined terms and the presence of currently existing PFAS language in each standard are included in red-lined standards on Green Seal's website.