

Announcing Development of New Criteria & Seeking Stakeholder Input



PFAS Prohibition Revision

As of September 2021, Green Seal is inviting stakeholders and the public to participate in the following criteria update: the prohibition of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in Green Seal-certified products.

“PFAS” is the term for a group of more than 9,000 chemicals that are hazardous to human health and ecosystems. Of primary concern, PFAS compounds disrupt human endocrine and reproductive systems, even at extremely low levels. They are also “persistent,” meaning they degrade very slowly and remain in our bodies, homes, water, and soil for decades or longer.

Green Seal has long restricted several well-known long-chain PFAS chemicals (typically containing 7 or more carbon atoms) in certified products. However, a growing body of evidence indicates that short-chain PFAS chemicals 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 act early to prohibit all approximately 9,000 PFAS chemicals in certified products.

Incorporating additional PFAS criteria into Green Seal standards will reduce PFAS in the supply chain and help certified product manufacturers assure customers that their products are free of these harmful chemicals

Join Us to Set the Bar for Health & Environmental Leadership

Green Seal seeks participation from industry experts, academic researchers, household buyers, and facilities managers. [Sign Up Today](#) to get involved and stay updated on this project.

Encouraging Safer Alternatives to “Forever Chemicals”

PFAS chemicals have been used for decades across many product categories because they function very well at making items stain, water, and grease resistant. However, study has shown these chemicals have negative impacts on our health and pollute our environment. While some of the more well-studied long-chain PFAS have been voluntarily phased out by manufacturers, short-chain replacement chemicals are shown to act similarly to their long-chain predecessors and may be [just as harmful](#) in some cases. As a result, Green Seal aims to achieve the following impacts by prohibiting all PFAS chemicals as a class:

Reduce Harmful Health Impacts

Exposure to PFAS chemicals has been associated with a variety of health impacts including [impacts on thyroid](#), [increased risk of certain cancers](#), and even [decreased responses to vaccines](#). Nearly all Americans have [measurable levels of some PFAS chemicals](#) in their blood, and health risks associated long-term exposure in communities with PFAS contamination in drinking water sources has been [well documented](#). It is also thought that people are exposed to PFAS through food packaging, ingesting dust in their homes, and applying products with PFAS on the skin. Eliminating PFAS from products will reduce these exposure pathways and associated negative health outcomes.

Increase Transparency and Eliminate PFAS from the Supply Chain

It can be challenging for consumers and even manufacturers to be sure that products do not use PFAS. For example, PFAS are often used in raw materials – a formula which isn’t always fully disclosed to a manufacturer. Green Seal always reviews 100% of a product’s formula including all raw materials. By

encouraging the user of safer alternatives, and confirming products do not contain PFAS, Green Seal can help increase transparency for consumers and eliminate PFAS from the supply chain.

Prevent Environmental Pollution

PFAS chemicals do not naturally biodegrade in the environment. This quality means they are problematic throughout their life cycle, including production, use, and even [disposal](#) – PFAS from consumer products leach into the environment in landfills, and burning PFAS waste can release toxic gases. PFAS have also been shown to [bioaccumulate in fish and other wildlife](#). Removing PFAS from the supply chain and consumer products prevents future environmental pollution.

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND ON PROJECT

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

Additional Green Seal standards will be addressed in Phases 2 and 3 of the project. Outside of food packaging, there is evidence that plastic packaging used in many product types, including cleaning products, may have unintentional PFAS due to a process called fluorination in which fluorine gas is applied to plastic to strengthen it and build up its barrier to moisture. Phase 3 of the project will aim to address the issue of PFAS in product packaging.

More About Green Seal.

Green Seal® is a global nonprofit organization that pioneered the ecolabeling movement with a mission to transform the economy for a healthier, greener world.

For 30 years, Green Seal's rigorous standards for health, sustainability and product performance have driven permanent shifts in the marketplace, empowering better purchasing decisions and rewarding industry innovators. With thousands of certified products, services and spaces from the world's leading companies, the Green Seal certification mark is a universal symbol that a product or service meets the highest benchmark of health and environmental leadership.



Learn More About Green Seal's Standard Development Process

Green Seal develops standards according to international best practices to define environmental leadership and set certification requirements for products. To learn more about this process, [visit Green Seal's website](#).

Sign Up to Get Involved in PFAS Prohibition Revision

Green Seal seeks participation from stakeholders in industry, academic researchers, household buyers and professional product users. [Sign Up Today](#) to get involved and stay updated on this project.