



Standard Withdrawal Proposal

Coated Printing Paper (GS-10)

June 28, 2021

Overview. The following standard is proposed for withdrawal. This proposal summarizes Green Seal's rationale for the withdrawal of this standard.

- Standard for Coated Printing Paper (GS-10, Edition 2.1).

Green Seal is accepting comments on this proposal from June 28, 2021 to July 28, 2021.

We encourage all stakeholders and members of the public to submit feedback including supportive comments, additional information, or objections.

Instructions for Comment Submission

Submit comments on this proposal to Green Seal via email to standards@greenseal.org.

Overview of Green Seal's Standard Withdrawal Process

Green Seal maintains standards in conformance with best practices in standard development via Periodic Maintenance, as defined by ANSI's Essential Requirements for Standard Development.

Under the Period Maintenance approach, Green Seal evaluates standards at least every five years for accuracy, relevance, and impact. If an evaluation confirms that the standard is accurate, relevant to the market, and has achieved a positive impact as intended, the standard remains active and available on Green Seal's website as the basis for certification of products or services.

If an evaluation determines that the standard is no longer accurate, no longer relevant, or no longer impactful, Green Seal may opt to revise and improve the standard or withdraw the standard. In the case of withdrawal, Green Seal's process is the following:

Public Notification. Green Seal publishes a proposal that provides context and rationale for withdrawing Green Seal standards.

Public Comment Period. Upon public notification, Green Seal announces an open Public Comment Period for stakeholders to submit supportive comments, neutral or informative comments, or objections. Public Comment Periods may remain open for either 15 or 30 days depending on the level of stakeholder activity within the last five years.

Publish Stakeholder Comments. Within 30 days of the close of a Public Comment Period, Green Seal publishes formally submitted stakeholder comments.

Publish a Final Decision on Standard Withdrawal. Green Seal posts notification on Green Seal's website that a standard will be withdrawn, or, if there is strong stakeholder opposition to the proposed withdrawal, may post notification of a Standard Revision initiative. The Final Decision includes Green Seal's responses to all formally submitted stakeholder comments.

Withdraw Standard. A withdrawn standard and its standard development documents remain on Green Seal's website within the Standards Documents Library for at least five years after the withdrawal date. Products and services cannot apply for certification to a withdrawn standard. Records of withdrawn standards can be beneficial for educational purposes for product designers and for higher education sustainability courses and research.

Rationale of Proposed Withdrawal

Green Seal has developed several standards for office, printing, and design-related paper products. As of June 2021, Green Seal has two standards in this category: Writing and Printing Paper (GS-7), and Coated Printing Paper (GS-10). In 2020, Green Seal reviewed the market for these products and noted that there has been very low demand for the certification of Coated Printing Paper over the last five years. Green Seal conducted stakeholder outreach regarding this product category. Green Seal's review demonstrated that Coated Printing Paper is a product category in which there are few impact opportunities and therefore, Green Seal is now proposing to withdraw this standard.

Product Category Overview

Coated printing paper differs from regular printing and writing paper through the addition of surface coatings added to improve appearance and/or the quality of the printing surface. Coatings can consist of clay, pigments, and binding agents that increase resistance to dirt, wear and tear, and provide a glossy or matte finish to a paper product.¹ Because of these properties, coated printing paper is mainly used to produce catalogues, magazines, and other advertising materials that utilize high numbers of photos.

While similar to printing and writing paper in general, coated printing paper differs in environmental impacts in the production and end-of-life phases. Coated printing papers must have their coatings removed before the paper can be recycled effectively. The clay additives used in coatings can also produce more sludge waste for the manufacturer.²

History of GS-10 Development

The Green Seal Standard for Coated Printing Paper (GS-10) was developed in 1997. Green Seal developed several paper standards around this time due to the global rise in demand for all industrial roundwood (all wood that is not used for fuel). In the United States alone, production and consumption of this material to make paper and paperboard increased by 15 million cubic meters from 1961 to 1997.³ This strong demand highlighted an opportunity to provide clarity and transparency to institutional purchasers and consumers via a third-party certification of coated paper products.

Certification to this standard was intended to recognize and verify leadership in this product category across the product lifecycle, with the two main impact categories being recycled content and chlorine bleaching. There are numerous benefits to using recycled paper compared to virgin fiber such as reducing energy, natural resource consumption, pollution, and waste sent to landfills and incinerators. Additionally, using chlorine to bleach wood-based products can result in harmful by-products that have negative health and environmental impacts. However, at the start of the 21st century, many manufacturers were using chlorine bleaching and not utilizing recycled content despite coated printing paper with 10% post-consumer content being widely available on the market.⁴ As a result, Green Seal developed a standard at that time focusing on addressing these major issues to identify leadership in this product category.

¹ Printing Industry Exchange. <https://www.printindustry.com/Newsletters/Newsletter-41.aspx>

² Conservatree. <http://www.conservatree.org/paper/Choose/Paper4Project.shtml>

³ The Global Position of the U.S. Forest Products Industry. https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/gtr/gtr_srs204.pdf

⁴ Make that Recycled: A Buyer's Guide to Recycled Coated Freesheet Paper:
<https://www.greenbiz.com/sites/default/files/document/O16F5374.pdf>

Summary of Standard

- Scope: Coated paper used in advertising, magazines, directories, card stock or catalogs.
- Product Specific Performance Requirements
- Product Specific Environmental Requirements
 - Coating Composition and Heavy Metal Restrictions
 - Recycled Content Requirements
 - Production Process Requirements
- Trademark Use Requirements

Products Certified to GS-10

At the date of this proposal, only one product is certified to this standard. That product is not commercially available at this time.

Public Comment Period

Green Seal is accepting comments from June 28, 2021 to July 28, 2021.

We encourage all stakeholders and members of the public to submit feedback including supportive comments, additional information, or objections.

Instructions for Comment Submission

Submit comments on this proposal to Green Seal via email to standards@greenseal.org.