



Standard Withdrawal Proposal

Paper Products Used for Food Preparation (GS-18) Food Service Packaging (GS-35) Recycled Latex Paint (GS-43)

November 8, 2023

Overview. The following standards are proposed for withdrawal. This proposal summarizes Green Seal's rationale for the withdrawals of these standards:

- ✓ Standard for Paper Products Used for Food Preparation (GS-18, Edition 2.1)
- ✓ Standard for Food Service Packaging (GS-35, Edition 1.1)
- ✓ Standard for Recycled Latex Paint (GS-43, Edition 1.1)

Every five years, Green Seal assesses each standard for accuracy and relevance to its respective market. A recent review of Green Seal product certifications indicated that from 2019 to 2023, the GS 18, GS-35, and GS-43 standards have had no new certifications, and that there is only one certified product across all three standards. Additionally, other third-party certification programs with leadership health and environmental criteria have been identified for these product categories. Therefore, Green Seal is proposing to withdraw these standards.

Green Seal is accepting comments on this proposal from November 8, 2023 to December 8, 2023. 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 by emailing 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 and the ISEAL Standard-Setting Code of Good Practice.

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.

GS-18 Paper Products Used for Food Preparation & GS-35 Food Service Packaging

Rationale of Proposed Withdrawal

Since 1989, Green Seal has established a reputation for market impact and expertise in formulated products, materials, and services associated with cleaning and facilities care. Our standards address the most significant and verifiable health and environmental impacts associated with consumable goods, e.g., those intended to be used and replaced within one year of purchase. Over the past three decades, Green Seal has also developed standards that are peripheral to this core scope of cleaning and facility care – in the case of this proposal: food service preparation and packaging. To maximize the positive impacts of our programs, Green Seal is strengthening our focus by sunseting certain standards outside of this core scope that have received no or little interest from the marketplace. Additionally, as part of our analysis in 2023 to determine relevancy of the standards on the marketplace, Green Seal identified that several other credible, third-party ecolabel programs now exist to cover the products in the scope of these two standards, and contain leadership criteria for the market including requirements for recycled content, composability, and chemical hazard restrictions. Therefore, Green Seal is proposing to withdraw our Standard for Paper Products Used for Food Preparation (GS-18) and our Standard for Food Service Packaging (GS-35).

Green Seal will continue to encourage restaurants, food preparation facilities and other food service locations to purchase third-party certified products including hard surface general purpose cleaners, floor care products, hand soaps, and paper products, including bath tissue and napkins in order to protect the health of their workers and diners and reduce environmental impacts in those areas.

Impacts of Food Preparation and Packaging Operations

In 2023 alone, the U.S. food packaging industry had a revenue of almost \$106 billion,¹ while the food contact paper market neared \$16 billion.² Food contact paper is regulated at a federal level across the globe, including as an indirect food additive in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Title 21, Part 176,³ The Food Safety and Standard Authority of India,⁴ and the European Food Safety Authority.⁵

Summary of health and environmental impacts associated with food preparation and packaging:

- Food packaging associated with food production is often fiber-based and designed as a single use item. This product category makes up over half of all municipal solid waste: In 2014, 63 percent of the 258 million tons of municipal solid waste generated in the US was single-use food packaging, and only 35 percent of this waste could be recycled or composted⁶
- Paperboard is the largest category of recycled material in the United States, with nearly 50 million tons recycled in 2022⁷

¹ Statista, Market Value Forecast of Food Packaging in North America, 2020-2028.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1005458/food-packaging-north-america-market-value/>

² Business Market Insights, North America Food Contact Paper Market.

https://www.businessmarketinsights.com/reports/north-america-food-contact-paper-market?utm_source=SatPR&utm_medium=10518

³ Code of Federal Regulations. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-21/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-176>

⁴ An overview of paper and paper-based food packaging materials: health safety and environmental concerns. Journal of Food Science Technology. [10.1007/s13197-019-03950-z](https://doi.org/10.1007/s13197-019-03950-z)

⁵ EFSA, Non plastic food contact materials. <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/topics/topic/non-plastic-food-contact-materials>

⁶ FoodPrint. <https://foodprint.org/issues/the-environmental-impact-of-food-packaging/>

⁷ American Forest & Paper Association, Paper and Cardboard Recycling, <https://www.afandpa.org/priorities/recycling>

- While recycled paper is commonly used in packaging and preparation, several studies have found negative ‘migratory’ compounds such as mineral oil and newspaper ink in the foodstuffs contained within recycled packaging,⁸ highlighting the importance of regulating chemical additives for impacts on human health
- Creating one pound of paper requires over six gallons of water,⁹ and recycling the same amount of paper saves roughly 3.5 gallons.¹⁰ Based on the 2014 data on municipal solid waste, recycled food packaging could save nearly 400 billion gallons of water annually

History of GS-18 and GS-35 Standard Development

Green Seal pursued standard development in this space because of the demand for more sustainable food preparation and packaging options by consumers given the large impacts these products can have, as noted above.

The GS-18 Standard for Paper Packaging Used for Food Preparation was first issued in July 1995, and was revised in January 1997 and May 2013. The GS-35 Standard for Food Service Packaging was first issued in March 2000 and was revised in March 2002 and May 2013. The standard revision in 2002 was a collaboration with the University of Tennessee Center for Clean Products and Clean Technologies and consisted of adding single use plates and bowls to the existing scope criteria, which had previously only focused on rigid containers. For both standards, the revisions in May 2013 included updates to harmonize formatting across Green Seal standards.

Summary of Standards

- GS-18
 - Product performance requirements must be within reasonable industry standards
 - Products must be unbleached or bleached using no chlorine or chlorine derivatives during manufacturing
 - Limitations on lead, cadmium, mercury, and hexavalent chromium in product packaging
 - Recycled content requirements for product packaging
- GS-35
 - Part A: Rigid Containers
 - Use instruction requirements
 - Performance requirements relating to grease, water, moisture, and compression resistance
 - Health and environmental requirements related to minimum recycled content, restrictions on chlorine bleaching, volume to weight ratio, compostability testing, and restrictions on toxic additives in inks and packaging
 - Communication requirements on use and disposal
 - Part B: Single Use Plates/Bowls
 - Performance requirements relating to grease, water, and moisture resistance
 - Health and environmental requirements relating to minimum recycled content, restrictions on chlorine bleaching, compostability testing, and restrictions on toxic additives in inks and packaging

Products Certified to GS-18 and -35

At the date of this proposal, there are no certified products under GS-18, and 1 product certified under GS-35.

⁸ Deshwal, 2019.

⁹ Sierra Club, <https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2015-1-january-february/ask-mr-green/hey-mr-green-what-about-all-water-it-takes-make-paper>

¹⁰ WaterVentures, Recycling and Water Conservation. <https://www.waterventures.us/blog/recycling-and-water-conservation/#:~:text=Most%20people%20don't%20consider,about%206%20gallons%20of%20water.>

GS-43: Recycled Latex Paint

Rationale of Proposed Withdrawal

Green Seal currently has two standards related to the paint market: the GS-11 Standard for Paints, Coatings, Stains, and Sealers, and the GS-43 Standard for Recycled Latex Paint. In 2023, Green Seal reviewed the market for these products and noted there has been very low demand for certification of Recycled Latex Paint over the last five years. Green Seal conducted a review of the market and determined that there is a lack of stakeholder interest for certification in this product category. Additionally, there are other third-party ecolabel programs that have leadership criteria meeting the market needs for sustainability recognition. Therefore, Green Seal is proposing to withdraw our Standard for Recycled Latex Paint (GS-43). Green Seal will continue to encourage businesses to purchase third-party certified products including paint, stains, and sealants certified under the Standard for Paints, Coatings, Stains, and Sealants (GS-11).

Impacts of Recycled Paint Operations

The US paint and coatings market has increased every year in the past decade, with over 1.3 billion gallons sold in 2022.¹¹ However, a 2011 report by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimated that over 75 million gallons of paint are either unused or discarded every year.¹² Several companies have capitalized on this discrepancy by collecting, filtering, and selling recycled paint. Recycled paint products are often a blend of several different types of paint, creating unique challenges when trying to reduce impacts such as volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and chemical hazards of different paint formulas. A nation-wide paint recycling initiative called PaintCare was created in 2009 by the American Coatings Association with the goal of enacting state-level legislation of paint recycling.¹³ However, major paint retailers have yet to break into this market with recycled paint offerings.

Summary of health and environmental impacts associated with paint recycling:

- One gallon of paint is made with 13 gallons of water. In 2022, the paint industry required almost 17 billion gallons of water to manufacture and synthesize virgin paint.¹⁴ Since 75 million gallons of paint go unused, this equates to almost 1 billion gallons of water wasted every year
- Many paints contain high amounts of VOCs that enter the air as the paint dries. VOCs found in paint have been linked to asthma, hormone disruption, nervous system damage, and several types of cancer.¹⁵ Additionally, VOCs can also have environmental impacts by contributing to the formation of ground-level ozone
- Common disposal recommendations for old paint do not allow for the recycling of the metal or plastic paint can,¹⁶ sending materials that can be easily recycled into landfills
- Hardened or liquid paint that ends up in a landfill has a high probability of entering groundwater by becoming leachate, a toxic liquid made of decomposed trash and rainwater.¹⁷ This liquid seeps downward through the waste layers and, if it escapes the waterproof containment barriers, will enter local waterways, threatening wildlife and the surrounding ecosystem

¹¹ Statista, Production volume of the paint and coatings industry in the US from 2015-2022.

<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1261305/paint-and-coatings-production-volume-us/>

¹² EPA, 2011 Evaluation of the Oregon Paint Stewardship Program. https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-09/documents/eval-oregon-paint-stewardship-program_1.pdf

¹³ PaintCare. <https://www.paintcare.org/>

¹⁴ The 71 Percent, Industrial Water Usage. <https://www.the71percent.org/industrial-water-usage/>

¹⁵ Healthy Home Guide: Paint, Environmental Working Group. <https://www.ewg.org/healthyhomeguide/paint/>

¹⁶ Lowes, How to Store and Dispose of Paint Properly. <https://www.lowes.com/n/how-to/store-dispose-paint-properly>

¹⁷ EPA, Groundwater Pathway Analysis for Lead-Based Paint. <https://archive.epa.gov/epawaste/nonhaz/municipal/web/pdf/gwrisk98.pdf>

History of GS-43 Development

Green Seal pursued standard development in this space due to an increase in recycled paint companies and the development of the Master Painters Institute (MPI) Green Performance Standard in 2005.¹⁸ Green Seal saw an opportunity to provide third-party certification of health and environmental leadership attributes of this growing market. The GS-43 Standard for Recycled Latex Paint was issued in September 2006, with a revision that added a recyclable benchmark of 95% in consolidated paint and 50% in reprocessed paint in May 2013. The MPI Green Performance Standard was revised in 2008 and 2009. In 2009, a non-profit paint stewardship organization called PaintCare Inc was created by the American Coatings Association and the Product Stewardship Institute. PaintCare has since assisted in the creation of paint recycling laws in eleven US states and the District of Columbia.¹⁹

Summary of Standard

- Requirements for collection, examination, and sorting of containers and paint product
- Performance requirements as demonstrated by the relevant Master Painter Institute (MPI) standards
- Health and environmental requirements related to recycled content volume, volatile organic and aromatic compound limitations, and chemical restrictions
- Product label requirements
- End of life container recycling and excess product disposal requirements

Products Certified to GS-43

At the date of this proposal, no products are certified under GS-43.

¹⁸ Master Painter History, MPI. <http://www.paintinfo.com/mpi/history/index.shtml>

¹⁹ PaintCare. <https://www.paintcare.org/paintcare-states/>

Public Comment Period

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