



Green Glossary

Definitions of Common Terms & Names in the Field of Green Cleaning

Healthy High Performance Cleaning

Healthy High Performance Cleaning (HHPC) provides the pathway and best practices to clean and maintain sustainable buildings. It goes beyond traditional cleaning for appearance sake only and provides sound strategy, practices and guidelines to clean for health, safety and environment. HHPC incorporates leading third-party environmental certification guidelines and was developed in consultation with The Ashkin Group and Green Seal. HHPC provides you tips, strategies, and guidelines that emphasize health, safety, and environmental concerns. It also provides purchasing guidelines for products and on-the job training tools.

Biodegradable

Materials that are organic liquids or solids, which will degrade as a result of natural bacterial activity under specific conditions with exposure to oxygen, water and light.

Compostable

Materials that are solid biodegradable substances that decay into nutrient rich, reusable material under controlled conditions such as a commercial composting facility.

DfE

Design for the Environment, the U.S. EPA's certification system for environmentally preferable products.

EcoLogo

EcoLogo is North America's most widely recognized and respected certification of environmental leadership. By setting standards and certifying products in more than 120 categories, EcoLogo helps you identify, trust, buy, and sell environmentally preferable ("green") goods and services.

Launched by the Canadian federal government in 1988, EcoLogo has grown to serve buyers and sellers of green products throughout the United States and Canada, and around the world. In fact, EcoLogo is North America's oldest environmental standard and certification organization (and the second oldest in the world). It is the only North American standard approved by the [Global Ecolabeling Network](#) as meeting the international ISO 14024 standard for environmental labels.

The EcoLogo program is managed by [TerraChoice Environmental Marketing, Inc.](#)

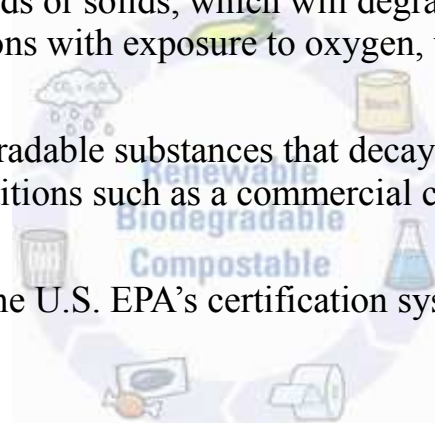
EPA

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Its mission is to protect human health and the environment.

EPP

Environmentally Preferable Products, those products that have a reduced impact on the environment compared to other products intended for the same use.

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Green Glossary



Green Label

The Carpet and Rug Institute's certification program for vacuum cleaners. To qualify for the **Green Label**, vacuums must go through a stringent testing process that measures three key performance factors:

- ***Soil Removal*** - The vacuum must remove a set quantity of soil from carpet in four passes.
- ***Dust Containment*** - The vacuum must not release more than 100 micrograms of dust particles per cubic meter of air. This protocol evaluates the total amount of dust particles released by the brush rolls, through the filtration bag and via any air leaks from the system, and is more stringent than the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.
- ***Carpet Appearance Retention*** - The vacuum should not affect the appearance of the carpet more than a one-step change based on one year of normal vacuum use.

High performance vacuum cleaners have a significant impact on improved indoor air quality (IAQ). At the same time, vacuums that effectively remove and contain soil while keeping the carpet looking good will help carpets last longer. Ultimately, better performing vacuums provide a greater return on investment and ensure a healthier indoor environment.

Source: *The Carpet and Rug Institute*, <http://www.carpet-rug.com/>

Green Seal

A widely recognized **green** product certification. The **Green Seal** organization, is "an independent, non-profit organization that strives to achieve a healthier and cleaner environment by identifying and promoting products and services that cause less toxic pollution and waste, conserve resources and habitats, and minimize global warming and ozone depletion. **Green Seal** has no financial interest in the products that it certifies or recommends nor in any manufacturer or company."

Green Seal Certified Products

The **Green Seal** is awarded to products that have less impact on the environment and work well. To earn the **Green Seal** a product must meet the **Green Seal** environmental standard for the category as demonstrated by rigorous evaluation, testing and a plant visit.

Green Seal Recommended Products

Green Seal publishes reports of product recommendations to provide guidance for institutional purchasers. The recommendations are based on a careful environmental screening of available information on products currently on the market. The recommended products appear to meet the prerequisites for being environmentally responsible based on data provided by their manufacturers. Recommended products have not gone through **Green Seal's** formal certification process.

Source: <http://www.greenseal.org>

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Greenwashing

The term is generally used when significantly more money or time has been spent advertising being **green** (that is, operating with consideration for the environment), rather than spending resources on environmentally sound practices. This is often portrayed by changing the name or label of a product, to give the feeling of nature, for example putting an image of a forest on a bottle of harmful chemicals.

HEPA

High **E**fficiency **P**articulate **A**ir filters used in HVAC systems, vacuum cleaners, etc. A HEPA filter removes a minimum of 99.97% of contaminants at 0.3 microns in size. In comparison, a human hair is about 60-75 microns in diameter. Particles less than 35 microns can't be seen with the naked eye. Pollen is in the 10-100 micron range, with dust in the .5-5 micron range. Particles under 5 microns can penetrate deep into the lungs.

IAQ

Indoor **A**ir **Q**uality. An important environmental consideration, because people spend approximately 90 percent of our time indoors. Common factors that affect IAQ are:

- People (exhalation, body odors, diseases)
 - Activities (work such as cleaning, using correction fluids, carbonless paper, pest control products, and personal activities such as wearing fragrances and smoking)
- Technology (photocopiers and laser printers)
- Furnishings (furniture, draperies, floor coverings)
- Finishes (paint, varnish, vinyl wall coverings)
- Building materials (caulking compounds, adhesives, wood laminates)
- Outdoor air quality
- Inadequate or contaminated air handling units
- Inadequate cleaning practices

Source: The Carpet and Rug Institute, <http://www.carpet-rug.com/>

LEED

Leadership in **E**nergy and **E**nvironmental **D**esign, a voluntary consensus-based national standard developed by the USGBC for rating buildings. There are various types of LEED ratings including LEED EB: O&M (existing buildings) and LEED NC (new construction).

MSDS: Material Safety Data Sheet

Written information on a product that reflects the hazards of working with the material in an occupational fashion. An MSDS is designed to provide both workers and emergency personnel with the proper procedures for handling or working with a particular substance. The sheet includes information such as physical data (melting point, boiling point, flash point etc.), toxicity, health effects, first aid, reactivity, storage, disposal, protective equipment, and spill/leak procedures.

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Microfiber

Textiles developed through new technology making them even finer than silk. The material used in cleaning products, such as mops and dust cloths, is a blend of microscopic polyester and polyamide fibers, split to create microscopic "hooks." These hooks act as claws, scraping up and holding dust, dirt, and grime. Microfiber is very effective for cleaning, because the fibers quickly and easily capture dirt rather than just moving it around. Microfiber, which can absorb up to 7 times its weight in water, is sometimes described as having a magnetic attraction to dirt and dust. Cleaning with microfiber products is environmentally friendly because chemical use can be minimized. Microfiber products are extremely soft, they do not scratch surfaces, but at the same time they are sturdy and tough on dirt.

OSHA

The U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration and its regulations requiring employers to protect the health and safety of their employees through training, use of certain procedures (including personal protection), development of emergency plans, and more.

Recovered Materials

Materials that have been recovered or diverted from solid waste to be recycled for other use.

Recycled Content

The amount or percent of recovered materials that a finished product contains.

USGBC

The United States Green Building Council is a coalition of building industry professionals working to promote environmentally responsible, healthy facilities.

VOC

Volatile Organic Compounds contained in some cleaning products. VOCs can escape during product use and have been linked to smog formation. Green cleaning processes help minimize VOCs in the environment.

