

Hong Kong Green Label Scheme
Product Environmental Criteria for
Detergents for Sanitary Facilities (GL-003-002)



BACKGROUND

The Hong Kong Green Label Scheme (HKGLS) is an independent and voluntary scheme, which aims to identify products that are, based on life cycle analysis consideration, more environmentally preferable than other similar products with the same function. The Scheme is organized by the Green Council (GC) with contributions from the HKGLS Advisory Committee and a number of supporting organizations.

The prime objectives of HKGLS are:

- For Consumers: assist in making purchases of products that are less harmful to the environment;
- For Industry: stimulate development and production of environmentally preferable alternatives.

This specification sets out the requirements that detergent products for sanitary facilities will be required to meet in order to be licensed to use the HKGLS label. The requirements include environmental criteria and product characteristics. The specification also defines the testing and other means to be used to verify conformance with the environmental criteria and product characteristics.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Sanitary detergents contain various chemical substances such as surfactants, softeners, acidic/alkaline substances, disinfectants, preservatives, thickening agents, dyes, and other possible additives. The product residues and the wastewater discharged from the use of sanitary detergents may pose an adverse impact on aquatic organisms and present a significant burden on the wastewater treatment. The packaging of the products also contributes to solid waste generation.

LABEL OBJECTIVE

The aim of the environmental criteria developed for laundry detergents is to:

- Reduce toxicity of product residues/wastewater arising from the use of sanitary detergents, and to help reduce the environmental loading of sewage treatment facilities and the receiving water bodies; and
- Minimize waste production by reducing the amount of primary packaging.

PRODUCT DEFINITION

This document and all product environmental criteria therein apply to all liquid and solid multifunctional products designed for sanitary facilities including water closets, kitchens, laundry rooms, bathrooms, and showers. The document applies to products for use both by consumers and by professional cleaners. The products may be either disinfecting or non-disinfecting.

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PRODUCT ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA

The table below sets out the product environmental criteria for Detergents for Sanitary Facilities (GL-003-002) under the HKGLS.

The environmental criteria developed focus on ingredients in the products. Accounts has not been taken of the raw material production process.

Criteria	Verification Method
1. The detergent shall be easily biodegradable.	A or C
2. The detergent shall not contain the following substances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non – biodegradable completing agents such as ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid (EDTA); • APEO (alkyl phenol ethoxylate); and • Chlorine bleaching agents. 	A or C
3. The detergent shall contain the following substances in a limited level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NTA (nitrilo-tri-acetate) shall not exceed 10%; • Phosphate shall not exceed 0.5%; • Phosphonates shall not exceed 0.4%; 	A or C
4. Quaternary ammonium salts that are not readily biodegradable shall not be used.	C
5. Colouring matters / dyes / pigments in the product must be approved for use in foodstuffs and/or cosmetics by relevant national or local environmental regulations.	A declaration of compliance shall be provided together with a full list of all dyes or coloring agents used.
6. Packaging Requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum packaging limit: 18g per 100g of product in use. General packaging requirements (refer to criteria for packaging materials: GL-Packaging).	B, C, D

Legend:

A - Analytical testing shall be performed by laboratories that meet the requirement laid out in the EN45001 standards or any equivalent systems e.g. HOKLAS, IEC/ISO 17025

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- B – Inspection of product samples
- C- Review of supporting information as required by the GC
- D – Interviews with relevant personnel and/or site visits to relevant facilities

Notes on Verification Method

- 1a Appropriate *test* results, showing that the surfactants used are aerobically biodegradable shall be provided.
- 1b The formulation of the product together with details of each ingredient shall be provided. The EC Detergent Ingredient Database (DID) list (See Resources Centre at <http://www.greencouncil.org/eng/greenlabel/res.asp>) indicates whether a specific surfactant is aerobically biodegradable or not (the surfactants with an entry of 'R' in the column on aerobic biodegradability are readily biodegradable). For surfactants which are not included in the DID list, the relevant information from literature or other sources shall be provided. Ingredients will be considered readily biodegradable if the level of biodegradability measured is at least 60% within 28 days.
- 2 The applicant shall provide documentation to confirm that the listed substances have not been included in the product. Copies of the material safety data sheets shall be provided for all ingredients (whether substances or preparations).
- 3 The formulation of the product shall be provided together with the details of the constituent substances.
- 4 The applicant shall provide documentation showing the biodegradability of any quaternary ammonium salt used.
- 5 List of permitted colorants in food is stated in Schedule 1 of Cap 132 H of Colouring Matter in Food Regulations.
- 6 A description of the materials used in packaging and labels and an empty package shall be provided, together with a declaration that the packaging materials do not contain chlorine-based plastics.