

Hong Kong Green Label Scheme

Product Environmental Criteria for Hand Dishwashing Detergents (GL-003-004)



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 that hand dishwashing detergents 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

Dishwashing detergents are consumed in large quantity in Hong Kong every day. Such dishwashing detergent products contain various chemical substances such as surfactants, softeners, alkali, bleaches, preservatives, dyes, and other additives. Detergent components such as surfactants may accumulate and may be toxic or otherwise harmful to the environment.

The greatest environmental impact of dishwashing detergents takes place at the stage of product-use. The product remnants and the wastewater discharged from the use of dishwashing detergents may pose and adverse impact on the aquatic organisms and present a significant burden on wastewater treatment. The packaging of the products also contribute to solid waste generation.

LABEL OBJECTIVE

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

- Reduce the environmental hazards of product residues and wastewater discharged arising from the use of dishwashing 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 and promoting its reusability and/or recyclability.

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PRODUCT DEFINITION

This document and all product environmental criteria therein apply to all hand-wash dishwashing detergents. Rinsing agents are not covered in this document.

The hand dishwashing detergent shall be able to perform at least as well as the reference detergent when tested by relevant ASTM method. The reference detergent shall be tested at a concentration of 0.1%. The concentration used by the manufacturer in the test shall not exceed 0.1%.

PRODUCT ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA

The table below sets out the product environmental criteria for hand dishwashing detergents (GL-003-004) under the HKGLS.

The environmental criteria developed focus on ingredients in the products and its packaging. Account has not be taken of the raw material production processes.

Criteria	Verification Method
1. The detergent shall be easily biodegradable.	A,C
2. The detergent shall not contain the following substances: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EDTA (Ethylene diamine tetra-acetic acid);• Alkyl phenol ethoxylates (APEO);• NTA (nitrilotri acetic acid).	A,C
3. Phosphate and Phosphonates in the detergent shall not exceed 0.5% per kg of the product.	A,C
4. 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).

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

Tests for “Easy Biodegradability” in accordance with the Annex to Commission Directive 67/548/EEC dated 31 October 1993.