



THE ORIGINAL GREEN  
SEAL OF APPROVAL  
SINCE 1989

# GS-50

## Green Seal™ Standard for Personal Care and Cosmetic Products

### ***Why the Standard Was Created***

The personal care and cosmetic market is one of the leading categories making green claims on products. However, most claims are based on a single attribute, usually raw material sourcing (organic or natural) or the lack of animal testing. As a result, there was a need for a standard addressing the broad, life-cycle considerations for these products. GS-50 is the first standard that comprehensively addresses the health, environmental, and labeling concerns for a wide variety of leave-on personal care products. The standard provides a tool for companies to improve the sustainability of their products and to earn certification, and a way for consumers to know that their personal care products are safer for their families and the earth, while delivering the performance they expect.

### ***Scope of GS-50***

The standard covers the product life-cycle for personal care products intended to be left on the body and hair, including, but not limited to, lotions, hair styling products, sunscreen, nail polish, insect repellent, makeup, and antiperspirant.

### ***Key Areas of Standard***

To achieve certification, manufacturers need to satisfy performance, health and environmental, social responsibility, packaging, and labeling requirements.

### **Product-Specific Performance Requirements**

- Products certified to GS-50 must demonstrate performance for the primary product characteristics. Antiperspirant, insect repellent and sunscreen must meet additional specific criteria.

### **Product-Specific Sustainability Requirements**

- All product components, including the components that make up fragrances, are reviewed against the criteria in the standard.
- The standard prohibits components that are carcinogens, reproductive toxins, mutagens and neurotoxins/systemic toxins, endocrine disruptors and asthmagens as well as a host of other chemicals of concern.
- Products must not be acutely toxic, cause skin or eye corrosion or irritation, or cause skin sensitization.
- Animal testing of the product or its components in order to meet the provisions in the standard is prohibited.
- Limits are applied to volatile organic compounds (VOCs), aquatic toxicity and biodegradability, bioaccumulation, eutrophication, and lead contamination.
- There are additional considerations to further protect human health and the environment such as allergen labeling, limits on nanoscale components and labeling requirements, and formulation limits for colors and photosensitizers.

SUSTAINABILITY  
LEADERSHIP STANDARDS



INDEPENDENT  
THIRD-PARTY  
CERTIFICATION



SUSTAINABILITY  
RESEARCH &  
LIFE CYCLE ANALYSIS



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE  
FOR INSTITUTIONAL  
GREENING



## Manufacturing Sustainability Requirements

- Quality assurance and control practices and procedures are required (i.e. practices for the building and facility, equipment, personnel, raw materials, production, laboratory, labeling, records, and complaints).
- The use of energy and water during manufacturing must be reported, along with waste and emissions.

## Social Responsibility Requirements

- The company must submit documentation showing that production meets social responsibility requirements: freedom of association and collective bargaining; freedom of labor; freedom from discrimination; occupational health and safety; and conditions of employment.

## Packaging Requirements

- The primary and secondary packaging must reduce the use of new packaging material by being either source reduced, recyclable and contain 25% post-consumer content, contain 50% post-consumer content, or be accepted through a take-back program.
- Heavy metals, phthalates, bisphenol A, and chlorinated packaging and applicators are prohibited.

## Communication and Labeling Requirements

- Product packaging must list the product ingredients. The general term 'fragrance' may be used for fragrance components, but a list of fragrance components must be easily accessible to users (i.e. through the company website or customer service). The label must state if fragrance has been added and must indicate any allergen components.
- Packaging must include instructions for proper use to maximize product performance and minimize waste.
- Organic claims must follow the USDA National Organic Program or the NSF/ANSI 305 standard.
- Natural and biobased claims must be supported with documentation for verification and meet Green Seal's specific definition.
- Products containing components known to enhance skin's sensitivity to UV rays must include a statement about the increased risk of sun exposure.
- The label must include proper disposal instructions including clear package recycling instructions.

**This is only a summary of GS-50. The full standard is available for free viewing and downloading at [www.greenseal.org](http://www.greenseal.org). For more information call 202-872-6400 or email [greenseal@greenseal.org](mailto:greenseal@greenseal.org).**