



August 27, 2007

## **PROJECT INITIATION & NOTIFICATION: New Green Seal Environmental Standard for Soaps and Shower Products, GS-44**

Green Seal™ is proposing the development of a new environmental standard on consumer soaps and shower products (*Proposed Title: Green Seal Environmental Standard for Soaps and Shower Products GS-44*). Green Seal is a non-profit organization devoted to working towards environmental sustainability through environmental standard setting, product certification, and public education. The intent of Green Seal's standards is to reduce, to the extent technically and economically feasible, the environmental impacts associated with the manufacture, use, and disposal of products.

Green Seal issued an environmental standard on Industrial and Institutional Hand Cleaners and Hand Soaps (GS-41) on June 6, 2006. The new standard is expected to follow a similar format including scope, definition, product performance, product health and environmental, packaging, and labeling sections. The products proposed to be included in this standard are liquid soap, solid soap, shampoo, conditioner, bubble bath, and related bath and shower products that are rinsed off the body.

The market of hand, hair, and body soaps and related bath and shower products is significant. Shampoo and conditioners alone account for a \$4.1 billion market (Mintel). In 2000, the bath and shower products market was \$1 billion, which encompasses body washes, bath additives, after-bath products and specialty bar soaps (Packaged Facts). Consumers are increasingly demanding natural personal care products and this segment is by far the fastest growing area of personal care. The natural personal care market experienced growth of 15% in 2005 while the overall U.S. cosmetics and toiletries market grew by only 3.5% (NMI). More than half of all consumers indicate they want personal care products made with natural or premium ingredients and 44% are seeking organic ingredients (NMI).

With the rapid growth, and high consumer demand, an environmental label could provide clarity on which products are environmental leaders and assist consumers in their purchase decisions. The environmental impact of these products is primarily in the extraction of the raw materials and in the use phase (water consumption and energy to heat the water). Additionally, Ecolabelling Norway found additional significant environmental (ex. aquatic effects) and health concerns (ex. use of toxic ingredients) in this product category. The scope of this new environmental label program is anticipated to include such important impacts as packaging, aquatic concerns, and toxic ingredients.

The development of this new standard will be led by Green Seal staff, with input from stakeholders through the process. Contact Green Seal for additional information: [greenseal@greenseal.org](mailto:green seal@greenseal.org)

The development project is anticipated to have the following steps:

1. Scoping
2. Proposed Standard
3. Approval of Standard
4. Issued Standard

Information on this project can be found at the Green Seal web site:  
[http://www.greenseal.org/certification/gs44\\_consumerstandard\\_dev.cfm](http://www.greenseal.org/certification/gs44_consumerstandard_dev.cfm)

#### References:

Ecolabelling Norway. Background report for the 2<sup>nd</sup> aHWG-meeting EU-Ecolabel for Shampoo and Soaps. 2005.  
Mintel. Shampoo and Conditioner - US - March 2007.  
NMI. The Evolution of Natural, Organic and Premium Personal Care Report. 2006.  
Packaged Facts. The U.S. Bath and Shower Care Market 2000