



March 7, 2008

PROJECT INITIATION & NOTIFICATION: New Green Seal™ Environmental Standard for Restaurants and Food Service Operations, GS-46

More than six out of 10 consumers say they are likely to choose a restaurant based on its environmental efforts, according to the National Restaurant Association [2008 Restaurant Industry Forecast](#). As a result, the NRA forecasts that more restaurateurs will go green this year, most commonly through water and energy conservation through equipment and add-ons. Such sustainability efforts have already gone beyond energy conservation, including sourcing of sustainable and local foods and beverages; biodegradable single use products; green building materials and buildings; and use of renewable energy. These activities are right on target to meet the need the industry has, to reduce its costs and improve its environmental footprint. With the growing interest and activities, an environmental standard and certification program that provides a comprehensive framework and recognizes leadership in this industry is needed.

As a result, Green Seal is proposing the development of a new environmental standard on restaurants and food service operations (*Proposed Title: Green Seal Environmental Standard for Restaurants and Food Service Operations GS-46*). 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 services and the manufacture, use, and disposal of products.

Green Seal follows the ISO 14020 and 14024 standards for ecolabelling programs. This includes a life cycle approach to develop multi-attribute standards that recognize environmental leadership in the marketplace. The process to develop these standards is a transparent, independent, stakeholder-involved process. The criteria are scientific-based, objective, and justifiable.

Green Seal currently has an environmental standard and successful certification program on Lodging Properties (GS-33). The new standard is expected to follow a similar format including a standard scope, a definition section, environmental requirements, and marketing requirements. Some of the detail within each of these sections of the standard will be identified during the scoping phase of the project. Certification for this new standard (as all current standards) will include on-site auditing to ensure the organization meets all the requirements in the standard.

The standard is proposed to include commercial and noncommercial food service providers such as restaurants (independent to franchise facilities) and cafeterias. The operations may be tenants, owners, or contractors. Given the broad scope proposed, it is anticipated that the requirements in the standard will be adaptable to various situations. To help with this, a tiered system that provides different options to meet the certification requirements is expected.

The project is anticipated to have the following steps:

1. Scoping, 2. Proposed Standard, 3. Final Review of Standard, and 4. Issued Standard

The development of this new standard will be led by Green Seal staff, with input from an expert Technical Advisory Subcommittee, additional experts, and stakeholders. Contact Green Seal for information: standards@greenseal.org

Information on this project can be found at the Green Seal web site: http://greenseal.org/certification/g46_food_service_operations.cfm