



May 5, 2008

PROJECT INITIATION & NOTIFICATION: New Green Seal™ Environmental Standard for Residential Cleaning Services, GS-49

The cleaning industry is a \$48.4 billion dollar industry with expected annual growth of 5.3% through 2011¹. This represents a historical increase in demand for the years 1996, 2001 and 2006 and forecasts for 2011 and 2016. Accompanying the increase in the demand for residential cleaning services is a surge in associated environmental impacts. These environmental impacts mostly result from incorrectly dispensed cleaning products and the absence of simple, low cost practices that reduce dirt. Poor quality indoor air linked with improper residential cleaning practices can produce health effects ranging from headaches and dry eyes to nausea, dizziness, and fatigue. Those at risk from these effects are the workers and inhabitants of the residential facility, particularly vulnerable populations like pregnant women, babies, and children.

As a result, Green Seal is proposing the development of a new environmental standard for Residential Cleaning (Proposed Title: *Green Seal Environmental Standard for Residential Cleaning, GS-49*). 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.

The purpose of developing this new standard is to, promote sustainable residential environments through healthy and environmentally responsible cleaning services, protect vulnerable populations, and to reduce negative chemical impacts from cleaning processes on human health and the environment by reducing exposure to cleaning chemicals and reducing chemical waste.

Green Seal currently has an environmental standard and successful certification program on Cleaning Services for Institutions (GS-42). The new standard is anticipated to follow a similar format and include a scope, definitions, operational requirements, chemical use requirements, staff training, and water and waste requirements. Details within each of these sections of the standard will be identified during the scoping phase of the project. Please review this Project's Scoping and Stakeholder Invitation for information about that phase of the project.

The development of this new standard will be led by Green Seal staff, with input from experts and stakeholders through the process. Contact Green Seal for information: standards@greenseal.org

The project is anticipated to have the following steps:

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

Information on this project can be found at the Green Seal web site:

http://www.greenseal.org/certification/gs49_residential_cleaning.cfm.

¹ <http://www.freedoniagroup.com/commercial-And-Residential-Cleaning-Services.html>