



**PRESS CONTACT:**

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Linda Chipperfield, (202) 872-6400  
Green Seal/Vice President, Marketing &  
Outreach

New Paint Standard Defines Green Leadership...

**GREEN SEAL LAUNCHES GROUNDBREAKING NEW STANDARD  
IN THE PAINT INDUSTRY**

*Green Seal Releases an Updated GS-11 Paint Standard*

**Washington, DC** — May 12, 2008. Paint is one of the biggest contributors to indoor air pollution due to volatile organic compounds (VOCs), chemicals that can have short- and long-term health effects. The EPA reports that concentrations of many VOCs can be up to ten times higher than outdoors. The California Air Resources Board severely restricts the air effects of consumer products like paint and the USGBC LEED program credits the use of “green” paints. With this in mind Green Seal has updated its environmental standards for paint into a new GS-11, creating a groundbreaking set of guidelines for paint manufacturers.

The new standard works harder to protect indoor air quality by increasing the number of prohibited chemicals, reducing allowable VOC levels for base paint and colorants, requiring a more accurate test to measure VOCs and including expanded consumer education criteria.

The first edition of GS-11 prohibited 25 chemicals such as toluene, benzene and formaldehyde. But with the rapid growth of formulation technology, Green Seal wanted to expand this list to eliminate the possibility that a chemical could be used that was as harmful or potentially worse than the 25 chemicals on the list. By including a more comprehensive list of prohibited chemicals the standard removes these loopholes and ensures paint formulas are safer. Hazardous air pollutants and ozone-depleting compounds are prohibited, as are carcinogens, mutagens and reproductive toxins.

Low- or zero-VOC paints have experienced increased sales, but many shoppers are not aware that they can increase the VOC levels by adding colorants to the base paint. For most paints the darker the tint, the higher the VOC of the final blend. By adjusting the levels of VOCs allowed in base paint and including criteria for colorants, the new standard ensures that even a heavily tinted paint will still contain minimum VOCs.

Green Seal's updated GS-11 is the first paint standard in the US to require reduced VOC levels of colorants. The effective date for these new requirements will coincide with the new VOC limits for paint in the recently approved Suggested Control Measure approved by the California Air Resources Board effective January 2010.

Measurement of volatile organic compounds has historically been an imprecise process. The lower the VOC level, the more difficult it has been to get an accurate measure. Green Seal has incorporated a more direct method into the standard that produces a more accurate reading as the amount gets smaller. The test is estimated to be 10 times more effective and improves further as the VOC gets closer to zero. "I'm excited to see that Green Seal is moving away from EPA Method 24 and towards a direct measurement of VOCs for low VOC water-borne coatings" says Dane Jones, researcher at CalPoly, one of the leading researchers and experts of measuring VOCs. .

Green Seal considers the life cycle of a product when developing standards. The use and disposal of a product is an important aspect of this cycle and efforts have been made to "close the loop" on paint. Under the new standard manufacturers are required to include instructions on the label for proper disposal or, preferably, reuse or recycling of leftover paint. Users must be advised in source reduction (buying just what is needed), proper use to reduce waste, and proper ventilation. Pre-consumer waste and leftover paint should be collected and donated, as markets for recycled paint continue to grow. Any paint that is kept out of the waste stream helps protect the environment and reduces the raw materials required to make new paint.

Green Seal is happy to offer this new standard to paint manufacturers as a way to identify themselves as leaders in the industry. As consumers continue to demand safer, more sustainable products, this new standard provides a guideline to meet that demand. GS-11 can be downloaded at <http://www.green Seal.org>.