



January 29, 2010

**BALLOT RESULTS:** Green Seal Draft Final V2 Environmental Standard for Residential Cleaning Services GS-49

In the final stage of developing the Green Seal Environmental Standard for Residential Cleaning Services, GS-49, registered stakeholders were invited to review the Draft Final Version 2 Standard and submit a ballot. The ballot resulted in an 87% affirmative vote. The standard has been approved.

Below are the comments on the Draft Final Version 2 Standard from all ballots (affirmative and negative), with identifying comments removed, and Green Seal's response/efforts for resolution.

**Response to Comments:**

Comment:

We have object to the standard specifying inorganic materials for cleaning cloths. Our housekeepers use all organic and renewable resources for cleaning. We specifically do not want to use synthetics made from petroleum or chemical based materials. The standard needs to include acceptable use of natural fiber materials. The following needs modification:

**2.2 Cleaning Microfiber.** A product specifically designed for cleaning made from synthetic fibers that measure less than one denier. The most common type of microfiber for cleaning is a splittable bicomponent filament made from a combination of polyester and polyamide (nylon).

\*\*Please replace 3.3 “Microfiber “ with “Preferred Fiber ” or some other term to include natural cloths designed for cleaning. We use natural cloth fibers designed specifically for use as cleaning cloths (i.e. do not leave residue particles.etc...). The bamboo and hemp fabrics work well and can be washed.

**3.2.2 Durable Tools.** Microfiber mop heads, cloths and dusters, or comparable products, shall be used for all feasible residential cleaning purposes. The service provider may use alternate tools for specialized cleaning functions (e.g. chandelier cleaning, oven cleaning), when evidence is provided for necessity of the alternate tool.

\*\*Please remove the “Microfiber” restriction and use “Preferred Fiber” or some other term to define natural cloths designed for cleaning.

**Response:**

Green Seal did not intend to limit the cleaning tools to synthetic materials only (there could be just as effective non-synthetic options available now or in the future). As a result, the requirement did provide for the use of “comparable products.” Without changing the meaning of the requirement, the language was clarified as noted below:

***3.2.2 Durable Tools.** Microfiber mop heads, cloths and dusters, or **other durable and reusable** products, shall be used for all feasible residential cleaning purposes. The service provider may use alternate tools for specialized cleaning functions (e.g. chandelier cleaning, oven cleaning), when evidence is provided for necessity of the alternate tool.*

Comment:

I believe there is a conflict in the below two articles. In **3.2.3.2**, the article states we need to “**sanitize**” doorknobs, light switches, etc. Then in 3.4.4, the article is requiring that we “**disinfect**” surfaces touched by hands, which include light switches, doorknobs, handles and trash receptacles. Since there is no Green Seal approved disinfectant and we are

trying to get away from using the harsh chemicals, I am surprised to see the standard change for this application.

### 3.2.3.2 Cleaning Tools.

- Cleaning cloths, mop heads, and related tools that contact restroom and kitchen surfaces shall not be used to clean any other areas.
- Clean and sanitize cleaning cloths, mop heads, vacuum, floor attachments, and related tools that had contact with restroom, kitchen, and high touch contact, (including, but not limited to, doorknobs, light switch plates, telephone handsets) surfaces prior to use in another residence.

### 3.4.4 Restrooms:

- Disinfect surfaces touched by hands (e.g. door knobs, light switches, handles, etc.) and trash receptacles.

#### Response:

It has been shown that cleaning tools like cloths can become contaminated during cleaning of contaminated surfaces (e.g. food contact surfaces, restroom surfaces). This contamination may increase when the cloths are stored wet. As a result, effective treatment of these tools must be done before use again (especially in another's residence), to prevent cross-contamination. The Centers of Disease Control does not have specific guidance on how to prevent such cross contamination, but there is guidance from the International Scientific Forum on Home Hygiene (IFH) on the matter. To prevent cross-contamination, reusable cloths used in potentially contaminated areas (e.g. food-contact surfaces) should be decontaminated. In practice this is typically done by cleaning and sanitizing or hot machine washing the tools. The IFH also recommends that surfaces that have a high risk of contamination (and cannot be rinsed easily), like food-contact surfaces and touch surfaces in the bathrooms, require disinfection. However, there is concern about overuse of disinfectants. As a result, this standard includes assessment of needs for disinfection (e.g. to limit it to only areas that need it) and require disinfection only in the high risk areas of the touch surfaces of restrooms.

As a result, the requirements on this topic will not be changed since they appropriately address the concerns about overuse of disinfectants and prevention of illness and cross-contamination.