

Recycling Program Standard

Environmental Certification Services



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1.0 Purpose, Structure and Intended Uses

1.1. Purpose

This Standard describes the requirements for third-party substantiation of the claims asserted by companies operating Material Recycling Programs or Material Recycling Facilities.

This Standard allows a company:

1. To quantify the amount of material diverted from a landfill by its program or facility during a one year period;
2. To quantify annually for its program or facility, the percentage of salable and further recyclable material compared to waste that is landfill-destined, incinerated, or permanently stored (as in the case of some hazardous wastes);
3. To demonstrate that the materials produced by its program or facility meet the material classification requirements of the SCS Recycled Content Standard;
4. To make claims about its program or facility that conform with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Guides for the Use of Environmental Claims;
5. To demonstrate that its program or facility produces materials that when incorporated into finished products can conform with the Material and Resources criteria for recycled content for building products according to the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building rating system;
6. To demonstrate that it is not a waste storage facility; and
7. To demonstrate that it is processing incoming waste into usable material in an efficient manner and not unnecessarily sending materials to be landfilled or processed by a third party.

1.2. Structure of the Standard

The Standard provides:

1. The requirements for qualifying and quantifying input and output materials that serve as the basis for claims asserted by companies regarding material recycling programs or facilities;
2. Guidelines for suppliers; and
3. Marketing requirements that are applicable to all certified programs or facilities.

1.3. Intended Users

Intended users of this Standard are operators of material recycling programs or facilities, including individuals, businesses, organizations, or agencies, seeking third-party certification of conformance of a program or facility and to the requirements of this Standard, as well as individuals, businesses, organizations, agencies, or consumers interested in conducting business with companies whose program or facility meets the requirements of the Standard.

1.4. Voluntary Standard

This Standard is voluntary. It is not intended to replace any legal or regulatory requirements that may be applicable to user operations.

2.0 Scope, Goals and Limitations

2.1. Scope

This Standard applies to programs or facilities, and to any material produced by said program or facility, for which the operator is making a claim about the classification, quantity, type, and/or final destination of the material produced. The Standard allows the input and output materials to be qualified and quantified for the purposes of making a claim about the percentage of salable and further recyclable material compared to landfilled and incinerated waste, and/or treated or untreated hazardous waste.

The term “shall” is used throughout the Standard to indicate mandatory requirements. The term “should” is used throughout the Standard to indicate preferred requirements.

2.2. Goals

The major goals of this Standard are:

1. To provide a uniform standard by which to assess material recycling and reclamation programs or facilities for operators making Type II environmental claims (self-declared environmental claims as defined by ISO 14021:1999); and
2. To engender confidence in the marketplace that SCS certified programs or facilities consistently meet the requirements of this Standard [and its normative references].

2.3. Limitations

2.3.1. Health and Safety

The Standard does not address safety, health and performance concerns, if any, associated with its use. It does not address concerns with the applicable permitting, handling, and disposal with hazardous wastes. It is the responsibility of the user to establish appropriate conditions for such considerations and to determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use. Users shall note that compliance with the requirements of this Standard is no guarantee of regulatory compliance.

2.3.2. Environmental Tradeoffs

The Standard does not address any environmental tradeoffs that may be associated with the life-cycle phases of the program or facility. Therefore, there may be environmental tradeoffs associated with a certified program or facility.

3.0 Terminology

Specific terms and definitions are provided below.

Certification Assessment. Independent evaluation of a product claim using specific, predetermined criteria and procedures with assurance of data reliability.

Chain of Custody. The path that a product takes from its point of production to the end consumer, consisting of records of each entity that takes legal and/or physical possession along this pathway.

Claim. Oral, written, implied, or symbolic representation, statement, or advertising or other form of communication presented to the public or buyers that relates to an Operator's recycling program.

Component. A material or ingredient used in the manufacture of a product.

Content. Proportion, by mass, of a type of material in a product.

Data Review Period. The 12-month period of time represented by the data submitted for an assessment. This is typically the most recent four consecutive quarters. The data review period must be the same for all data included in the review.

Hazardous Material: as defined by CFR 40, Part 261- Identification and Listing of Hazardous Waste.

Material Recycling Facility. Refers to an industrial operation that processes reclaimed waste into useable material.

Material Recycling Program. A service or system administered for the purposes of reclaiming and/or recycling materials.

Manufacturer. Organization or individual responsible for the production of the product undergoing certification assessment.

Operator. The company, organization, or entity that owns and/or manages the recycling program or facility under review.

Outgoing Material. Any material leaving the program or facility under review. This includes, but is not limited to, finished products, intermediate materials, waste destined for a landfill, further recyclable materials, and wastes to be permanently stored.

Post-Consumer Material. Material generated by households or by commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities in their role as end-users of the product that can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes returns of materials from the distribution chain. (Source: ISO 14021:1999)

Note: For the purposes of the SCS certification program this is being interpreted to mean that any material returned from the distribution chain must meet the requirement of being from end-users to be considered post-consumer.

Post-Industrial Material. See pre-consumer material. Use of the term, “post-industrial material” has been phased out.

Pre-Consumer Material. Material diverted from the waste stream during the manufacturing process. Excluded is the reutilization of materials such as rework, regrind or scrap generated in a process and capable of being reclaimed within the same process that generated it. (Source: ISO 14021:1999)

Reclaimed Material. Material that would have otherwise been disposed of as waste or used for energy recovery, but has instead been collected and recovered (reclaimed) as a material input, in lieu of new primary material, for a recycled or a manufacturing process. (Source: ISO 14021:1999)

Recycled Material. Material that has been reprocessed from recovered [reclaimed] material by means of a manufacturing process and made into a final product or into a component for incorporation into a final product. (Source: ISO 14021:1999)

Note: SCS may interpret a material to be recycled if it is “used, reused, or reclaimed” according to United States Government Code of Federal Regulations Title 40: Protection of Environment Part 261.1:

(4) A material is “reclaimed” if it is processed to recover a usable product, or if it is generated...

(5) A material is “used or reused” if it is either:

(i) Employed as an ingredient (including use as an intermediate) in an industrial process to make a product (for example, distillation bottoms from one process used as feedstock in another process). However, a material will not satisfy this condition if distinct components of the material are recovered as separate end products (as when metals are recovered from metal-containing secondary materials); or

(ii) Employed in a particular function or application as an effective substitute for a commercial product (for example, spent pickle liquor used as phosphorous precipitant and sludge conditioner in wastewater treatment).

Records. Any information in written, visual, or electronic form that documents the activities undertaken by a user to demonstrate conformance with this Standard.

Stakeholders. People who are, or who might be, affected by any action taken by users of this

Standard. Examples are: customers, workers, partners, contractors, suppliers, etc.

Standard. When capitalized, refers to this Standard (SCS Recycling Program Standard).

Supplier. Organization that supplies a material, product or service to the manufacturer.

Waste. Anything for which the generator or holder has no further use and which is discarded or is released to the environment. (Source: ISO 14021:1999)

4.0 Referenced Documents

4.1. Normative References

The following normative documents contain provisions that, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this Standard.

1. ISO 14021:1999, “Environmental labels and declarations – Self-declared environmental claims (Type II environmental labeling).”
2. Code of Federal Regulations Title 40: Protection of Environment, Part 261- Identification and Listing of Hazardous Waste
3. ISO 14024:1999, “Environmental labels and declarations – Type I environmental labeling – Principles and procedures.”
4. ISO 14020:2000, “Environmental labels and declarations – General principles.”

4.2. Additional References

1. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims (available at: www.ftc.gov)
2. ISO 9001:2000, “Quality management systems – Requirements.”
3. ISO 14001:2004, “Environmental management systems – Requirements with guidance for use.”
4. U.S. Green Building Council Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design (LEED) Green Rating Guides (available at: www.usgbc.org)

5.0 Requirements

This section of the Standard describes general conformance requirements for manufacturers.

5.1. General Conditions

5.1.1. Traceability

Auditable traceability practices shall be employed by the Operator to assure that outgoing materials/products from programs or facilities conforming to this Standard can have all input materials tracked back to an identifiable origin.

5.1.2. Chain of Custody

5.1.2.1. Tracking Forward

Auditable practices shall be employed by the manufacturer to assure that materials from programs or facilities conforming to this Standard can be tracked forward through the chain of custody, to ensure that the quantity of each material and its destination can be identified.

5.1.2.2. Segregation

The Operator shall maintain practices for segregating and clearly identifying materials by type, source, and/or destination in stages such as receiving, storage, transfer to shipping, and shipping.

5.1.3 License to Operate

The manufacturer shall have documentation of any and all valid local, state, or federal permits required to operate a recycling program or facility.

5.2. Requirements for Material Qualification & Quantification

5.2.1. Material Qualification

5.2.1.1. Recycling Process Description

The Operator shall provide a diagram and description of the recycling and process showing all inputs of materials, all internal material flows (e.g., reuse or recycling of scrap), and all material outputs.

5.2.1.2. Incoming Material Verification & Validation

The Operator shall detail the composition of each incoming material, its source, and the nature of any processing that occurred to it before it reached the program or facility. Suppliers of incoming material may be contacted by SCS to confirm validity and, at the discretion of SCS and on condition of their consent, may be subject to further review.

5.2.1.3. Registry of Suppliers

The Operator shall maintain auditable records of current suppliers and supplies.

5.2.1.4. Material Quality

The Operator shall demonstrate that outgoing materials are usable as a feedstock for additional manufacturing, as inputs for additional recycling, or as a finished product.

5.2.2. Material Quantification

5.2.2.1. Source Material Supply Data

Summary data containing the amount of material obtained from each supplier/source under review shall be maintained and provided for the data review period. Data should be provided on a dry weight measurement basis, or in standard reporting units with a conversion factor that allows calculation to a dry weight basis.

5.2.2.2. Finished Material/Product Formulation

The Operator shall provide the formulation/composition of all finished products or outgoing materials produced by the program or facility under review. If applicable, these data shall include a list of all components, the amount (by dry weight or some other measure than can be converted to dry weight) of each component in the finished product, and the percentage of each component in the finished product (total dry weight basis).

5.2.2.3. Gross Production/Outgoing Materials

For every material/product leaving the facility or handled by the program under review, the Operator shall provide gross production totals (numbers of units and weight of units) for the data review period; the next, immediate destination (e.g. incineration, further recycling, sales, etc.) of each material/product shall also be noted. These data shall show that the quantity and destination of all incoming materials are accounted for. At the discretion of SCS, recipients of these materials may be contacted to confirm material flow and destination.

5.2.2.4. Waste Generation

The Operator shall maintain auditable records for the data review period of the amounts and units of measurement for the waste generated and sent to disposal or incinerated. These records shall identify any hazardous waste generated including its quantity, type, and final destination. As required by law, the Operator shall classify hazardous waste according to CFR 40, Part 261- Identification and Listing of Hazardous Waste.

5.2.2.5 Scrap Reuse

The Operator shall maintain auditable records for the data review period of the amounts and units of measurement for the scrap reused internally, if any, within the program or facility under review.

5.2.2.6. Material Inventories

The Operator shall maintain auditable recycled material inventories of the amount and types of materials used at the recycling program or facility under review for the data review period.

5.2.2.7. Material Turnover

The Operator shall provide data that show that the program or facility is not acting as a long-term storage facility for unusable waste materials.

5.2.2.8. Recycling Efficiency

The Operator shall provide data and information that shows that incoming materials are being processed such that as much usable material is being extracted as is technologically and economically feasible.

5.2.2.9. Scale Calibration

The Operator shall maintain an auditable record that confirms that all scale(s) used for measuring materials onsite have been calibrated during the data review period.

5.4. Requirements for Management

5.4.1. Record Keeping

The Operator shall establish and maintain record-keeping procedures to provide evidence of conformity with the Standard's requirements. The user shall keep, at a minimum:

1. Records of all suppliers providing materials for the program or facility under review;
2. Records of all purchased materials; and
3. Records of materials/products sold or disposed of.

The Operator shall ensure that records are retained for a minimum of five years and are auditable.

6.0 Guidelines for Suppliers

6.1. Suppliers

The Operator shall provide and facilitate the availability of supplier information relevant to the certified claim(s).

7.0 Certification and Continued Conformance

7.1. Certification

Once a recycling program or facility qualifies for certification based on conformance with the Standard, an SCS Recycling Program or SCS Recycling Facility certificate of achievement is issued. Certificates are valid for one year, provided that the Operator maintains conformance with the requirements.

7.2. Continued Conformance

An annual renewal audit to demonstrate continued conformance with the Standard is required if the Operator wishes to continue making a certified claim.

7.3 Notice of Change

If the recycling program or facility makes changes to its procedures that affect its conformance with the requirements of the Standard, it shall notify SCS of these changes.

8.0 Marketing Requirements

8.1. National Requirements

All uses of the SCS Certification Certificate or references to the certification in advertising and marketing shall be conducted in conformance with U.S. Federal Trade Commission guidelines, or other national guidelines if outside of the U.S.

8.2. SCS Requirements

The manufacturer shall comply with the requirements of the *SCS Labeling and Language Guide* at all times.¹

9.0 Complaints, Appeals and Disputes

All complaints, appeals and disputes are handled in accordance with the *SCS Complaint, Appeals and Disputes Procedure*.²

¹ Provided as a supplement to the SCS Assessment Services Agreement.

² Provided as a supplement to the SCS Assessment Services Agreement. This document is also available on the SCS website at: www.SCSglobalServices.com and upon request.