

Green product standards



We're constantly working to lighten our environmental footprint. One of the ways we do this is by setting stringent standards for our green product portfolio.

By developing green product standards, we choose to be proactive stewards of the environment and our health. Our standards lay out the environmental criteria we use to determine a product's eligibility for our green product portfolio. They are informed by state laws and regulations and guided by leaders in sustainability including: Kaiser Permanente's Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Standards, the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) Green Guides and Practice Greenhealth.

By adhering to these standards, we make it easier for our partners to purchase products that have a reduced impact on the environment.

To be added to our green product portfolio, products must meet at least one of our seven standards:

1. Recyclable

To be labeled as recyclable, products or packaging must be accepted as recyclable by the substantial majority of facilities where the item is sold. Products in this category can also include product or packaging labeled with consumer-friendly recycling information.

2. Recycled content

Products or packaging must meet one of the following thresholds:

- Primary packaging that directly encases the product must have more than 10% post-consumer recycled content*
- Secondary packaging that encases the primary packaging must have more than 30% post-consumer recycled content
- Products must be made from 10% or more of post-consumer recycled content

We also honor Forest Stewardship Council certified packaging as a result of 100% packaging content from well-managed forests or a mix of responsible sources.

3. Compostable/biodegradable

Compostable:

Our compostable products or packaging must contain material that will break down into—or otherwise become part of—usable compost in a safe and timely manner in an appropriate composting program or facility.

Our products must meet the following standards, as we recognize that in some states, it's unlawful to sell any product with a compostable claim unless the product has a third-party independent verification meeting one of the following applicable standards:

- ASTM D6400 for compostable plastics
- ASTM D6868 for biodegradable plastics used as coatings on paper and other compostable substrates

Biodegradable:

We recognize that in some states it's unlawful to sell any plastic product or packaging with a biodegradable or degradable claim, whether the product is made of plastic alone or in combination with other material. For this reason, none of our plastic products are labeled as biodegradable.

Non-plastic biodegradable products cannot end up in the solid waste stream and must completely break down and decompose into elements found in nature within a reasonably short period of time after customary disposal.

To be considered flushable and/or septic-safe, products must break down easily and quickly after flushing, as determined by testing in real-world conditions.

*Post consumer content is waste that has been used by a consumer, disposed of and then diverted from the landfill.

4. Waste reduction

Products or packaging that meet this standard must incorporate ways that prevent materials from ending up as waste before they reach the recycling or disposal stage.

5. Bio-based

Biobased product or packaging must be derived from plants or other renewable agricultural, marine and forestry materials and provide an alternative to conventional petroleum-derived products.

6. Renewable material

Products or packaging that contain renewable material(s) must come from resources that are replenished as quickly—or quicker—than consumed. The U.S. Green Building Council defines rapidly renewable materials as those that are planted and/or harvested within a 10-year cycle, including but not limited to sugarcane, bamboo, cork, straw and flax.¹

7. Fewer chemicals of concern

We prioritize excluding the below chemicals of concern from our products. To meet our fewer chemicals of concern standard, products must not include all 11 of the chemicals we prioritize. Products must not contain any of the following substances:

- European union restriction of hazardous substances (EU RoHS) directive (electronics)
- Bisphenol A (BPA)
- Polyvinyl chloride (PVC)
- Bromine and chlorine-based compounds
- Phthalates including di(2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (DEHP)
- Prop 65 chemicals
- Antimicrobial/antibacterial agents
- Persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic chemicals (PBTs)
- Non-halogenated flame retardants (FRs)
- Metals
- Perfluorinated chemicals

Reference: 1. LEED U.S. Building Council, New construction, 2009, Rapidly Renewable Materials, <https://www.usgbc.org/credits/new-construction-schools/v2009/mrc6?view-language>, Accessed October 20, 2020.