



Making Heads or Tails of **Green** Products Certifications:

Walk down the cleaning aisle of any grocery store today and you likely will see a “green” product for every choice. And you may even see some of those standard products with some type of logo indicating that this product is also considered “green.” But what exactly does that mean?? Here’s the skinny on all the “green” logo’s, claim and products.



United States Environmental Protection Agency:

The EPA does NOT certify products. It simply makes recommendations on what institutions should purchase. This logo only indicates that the item you are purchasing is considered “green” because it meets the recovered fiber/post-consumer fiber content as established by the EPA.

Recovered Fiber—Fiber generated after the completion of the paper making process. Example: envelope cuttings, bindery trimmings, printing waste, butt rolls (no, that is not another term for toilet paper) and mill wrappers, obsolete inventory and rejected unused stock.

Post-Consumer Fiber—Finished product that has served it’s purpose, and then was recovered from or otherwise diverted from the waste stream for the purpose of recycling.



Green Seal Logo:

Green Seal is a non-profit, third party certifying organization that looks at the entire lifecycle of the product—from the raw materials used to make it, to whether it is recyclable. Both of Green Seal’s standards require the fiber to be 100% recovered materials, with a specific percentage from post-consumer materials and chlorine, its derivatives, and solvents containing chlorine are not to be used during the processing of these products. The percentage of post-consumer materials varies by product. Also, these products cannot contain any added pigments, inks, dyes or fragrances and the packaging must be free of inks, dyes, pigments, stabilizers or any other additives which may contain lead, cadmium, or hexavalent components.



EcoLogo:

Supports a continuing effort to improve and maintain environmental quality by reducing energy and materials consumption. EcoLogo measures a paper manufacturer’s mill performance, efficiency and pollution levels. The system gives credit to mills for any waste that is prevented from going to the landfill.



The Chlorine Free Products Association:

The CFPA is an independent not-for-profit accreditation and standard setting organization. Its focus is promoting sustainable manufacturing practices, implementing advanced technologies free of chlorine chemistry, and education consumers or alternatives. Tissue and towels are required to have a chain of custody, detailing the entire history or the paper, from harvesting to production and must contain at least 30% post-consumer content.



Green-e:

An independent certification from renewable energy products and purchases. The organization verifies that the manufacturer creates renewable energy by generating electricity. Under Green-e Energy criteria, electricity used in mills must come from eligible resources such as wind, solar, geothermal, biomass, or “low-impact” hydropower.



Forest Stewardship Council:

The intent of this council is to shift the market to eliminate habitat destruction, water pollution, displacement of indigenous peoples and violence against people and wildlife that often accompanies logging.



Green Restaurant Association:

Requires all paper products to be processed chlorine free and meet post-consumer waster criteria. The GRA’s criteria for post-consumer waste varies depending upon the item. For example: Dinner and beverage napkins—60% post-consumer; Dispenser napkins—90% post-consumer; Paper toweling—85% post-consumer and Toilet paper—60% post-consumer. These post-consumer percentages are the GRA’s required percentages, not anyone else.

I hope that this has helped you to understand those confusing logo’s and claims. Should you have comments, concerns or questions regarding the above information, please feel free to contact us at (352) 521-5643 or via e-mail at custserv@BigJohnsSupplies.com.