

# Summary of Minnesota and the City of Minneapolis' Regulations on Chemicals in Cleaning Products

**Website:** <http://www.moea.state.mn.us/lc/purchasing/cleaners-criteria-mn.cfm>

## Summary

**1. Background.** In 2003, Minnesota worked with representatives of several jurisdictions including the City of Santa Monica, CA; King County, WA; Massachusetts; Seattle, WA; Pacific Northwest National Laboratory; and others. The goal of the working group, coordinated by the [Center for a New American Dream](#), was to develop a set of specifications that could be used by institutional purchasers nationwide. Ultimately the process led to the adoption of the [Green Seal Standard for Institutional Cleaners \(GS-37\)](#) as the basis for cleaning product specifications.

Massachusetts is the first of the work group members to use the new consensus based criteria that build upon the [Green Seal Standard for Institutional Cleaners \(GS-37\)](#). The other participants, including Minnesota, are in the process of integrating the work group's purchasing criteria into their vendor requests.

**2. Minnesota's Vendor Certification of Environmental Attributes.** The state of Minnesota evaluates green cleaners based on a point system that assigns a value to the environmental characteristics of a product, with the total number of points representing an overall environmental rating of the product. The overall score can then be used to compare and eliminate products. [Minnesota's Vendor Certification of Environmental Attributes](#) evaluates the following "environmental concerns" listed in order of importance.

- Products shall not be toxic or highly toxic as defined by the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard, Appendix A (Se 29 CFR 1910.1200, Appendix A).
- Products should not include any ingredients recognized as carcinogenic.
- Select products with a "high flash point".
- Choose products with a pH of 2 to 12.5.
- Avoid products that contain petroleum-based ingredients. Instead, select products derived from biobased materials.
- Select products that minimize phosphate content.
- Products shall not contain any ozone depleting chemicals.
- Select products that maximize the opportunities to reduce, reuse and/or recycle packaging.

**3. Minnesota Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Guide.** Minnesota issued the [Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Guide](#) as a reference tool to

assist government agencies and schools in the selection of environmentally preferable products. This publication provides the following guidance in reference to cleaners:

- Product should have a flash point of 200°F or greater.
- Products should not contain SARA Title III chemicals.
- Products should not exceed a VOC content of 5%.
- Products should not contain chlorine, hypochlorite or phosphates.
- Avoid products that are extremely flammable, corrosive or highly toxic.
- Avoid products that contain petroleum-based ingredients. Preference should be given to biobased products.
- Avoid unnecessary fragrances and dyes that may irritate allergies.
- Choose products with refillable containers or those that are made from recycled materials.
- Choose pump spray containers instead of aerosols.

**4. Minnesota State Contract.** The Minnesota State Contract for cleaning products includes a number of environmentally preferable cleaning products that were evaluated using the [Green Seal](#) Standards.

#### **City of Minneapolis:**

**Website:** <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/procurement/>

#### **Summary**

**Low Environmental Impact Cleaning Policy.** In October 2006, the Minneapolis City Council passed a [resolution](#) that established the city's low environmental impact cleaning policy that became effective January 1, 2007. The resolution requires the city's Purchasing Department and its Operating Departments to purchase environmentally sensitive cleaning products and services.

Under the terms of the resolution, cleaning products and services procured by Minneapolis must, to the greatest extent practical, meet the minimum standards established by [Green Seal](#) or alternative standards that are determined by the city Purchasing Department to be equivalent. The Purchasing Department will be responsible for disseminating their guidelines to all city departments along with a sample list of acceptable cleaning products.