



September 25, 2009

STAKEHOLDER UPDATE: Crystalline Silica Clarification

The following is a clarification to Section 4.1 Compound Prohibitions in the Green Seal Environmental Standard for Paints and Coatings (GS-11), 2nd Edition, May 12, 2008, and Section 4.3 Chemical Prohibitions in the Green Seal Environmental Standards for Stains and Finishes (GS-47), 1st Edition, September 18, 2009..

As per the March 13, 2008 Background Document of the GS-11 2nd Draft of the Final Revised Standard, "IARC lists 'crystalline silica (inhaled in the form of quartz or cristobalite from occupational sources)' as Group 1: Carcinogenic to Humans. National Toxicology Program (NTP) lists 'silica, respirable size' as known to be human carcinogen. While California's Proposition 65 is cited in the standard only in terms of reproductive toxins, it lists 'silica, crystalline (airborne particles of respirable size)' as having carcinogenic effects. Each of the [carcinogen] listings are specific of the form of crystalline silica that have proven carcinogenic effects—respirable size or inhaled from occupational sources. Based on discussions and additional research, Green Seal believes that 'free crystalline silica' should not be added as part of manufacturer formulation...However, other forms of crystalline silica, contained as part of naturally occurring raw materials such as titanium dioxide or diatomaceous earth are not in a form that presents a carcinogenic danger and are not intentionally added by the manufacturer. Green Seal recognizes that other forms of crystalline silica, like quartz, are naturally occurring elements and may be a component of other mineral-based raw materials."

In GS-11 and GS-47, free crystalline silica is prohibited according to the specific form as listed, therefore; free crystalline silica is considered a prohibited compound and shall not be intentionally added to the product as an ingredient, defined as greater than 0.01% in the product or 100ppm. However, crystalline silica, as a result of naturally-occurring quartz contamination in mined extender pigments such as calcium carbonate or diatomaceous earth and other mineral-based raw materials, is not covered under the specific compound prohibition.

You can read background documents in relation to revision/development of the respective standards.

GS-11: http://www.greenseal.org/certification/g11_paintstandard_dev.cfm

GS-47: http://greenseal.org/certification/gs47_stains_clear_finishes.cfm

If you have any additional questions about Green Seal standards or the certification process, please contact Green Seal at 202-872-6400 or certification@greenseal.org.