



IBEL Fact Sheet

The Next Generation of Environmental Labeling

The Information-Based Environmental Label (IBEL) is an ambitious effort to create the next generation product labeling system designed specifically for the commercial cleaning industry. The industry has embraced "green," resulting in over 2,000 unique products made by over 500 cleaning product manufacturers currently "certified" under well-recognized third party programs. However, despite their success in driving the "greening" of the commercial cleaning industry, current product certification systems have demonstrated numerous inherent limitations, including but not limited to the following:

- Existing standards cover only a limited set of products, leaving hundreds, if not thousands, of "orphan" products with no options for certification;
- Many small and medium manufacturers are unable to fully participate due to the high cost of certification;
- Single pass/fail criteria fail to reward companies for continued product innovation and further reductions in health and environmental impacts;
- Certification program seals or dots lack comprehensive product information, prohibiting purchasers from making informed choices aligned with their needs and values; and,
- Standards development processes prohibit frequent updates of existing standards and discourage the creation of new standards for expanded product classes.

IBEL will directly benefit purchasers, distributors, and manufacturers by communicating, in a format reminiscent of a food label, important health and environmental information associated with the commercial cleaning products. Because IBEL would work cooperatively with existing labeling programs while directly addressing many of their limitations, IBEL will encourage and reward continuous improvement by innovative manufacturers who produce leadership products.

Characteristics of IBEL include the following:

- Expands and standardizes the set of health and environmental metrics for product reporting
- Information-based format compliments existing ecolabels and criteria
- Quantitative reporting system rewards continued product innovation, reducing potential health and environmental impacts
- Flexible system expands access to third party verification to products not currently covered under existing labels such as tools, equipment, and niche chemical products
- Multiple product verification tiers, up to and including full product verification by third party verifiers
- IBEL Product registry provides unprecedented access to select product data in a searchable, transparent system
- Affordable tiered fee structure, expands access to small and medium sized manufacturers
- Reduced fees for products with existing ecolabel certification from recognized programs

Who is developing IBEL?

IBEL is being developed by Ecoform in collaboration with ISSA. Ecoform, a group dedicated to securing a sustainable future through clean product innovation, has extensive experience in developing leading environmental product standards for a wide range of products, including standards for green cleaning chemicals, toys, building products, and consumer electronics. The development process for IBEL is being led by Jack Geibig, President of Ecoform.

How is IBEL being developed and when is it scheduled to launch?

IBEL is being developed through a robust process designed specifically to leverage the knowledge and wisdom of key thought leaders to create the next generation of environmental labeling, an information-based system of product labeling. Development of IBEL will occur in stages, beginning with the formation of a Core Committee comprised of key stakeholders tasked with developing the criteria and reporting framework of IBEL. Upon completion, the label will undergo robust pilot testing by leading manufacturers of both chemical and non-chemical products, before being launched sometime in the early summer of 2010.

Who is on the development team?

The Core Committee is comprised of key leaders from various stakeholder groups important to the commercial cleaning industry, including purchasers, certifiers, health and environmental advocates, unions, state and federal government, cleaning contractors, and large and small manufacturers of both chemical and non-chemical products. Members of the Core Committee include:

- American Federation of Teachers Labor Union
- The Ashkin Group, LLC
- Betco Corporation
- The Bullen Companies, Inc.
- Carroll Company
- Cushman & Wakefield
- Ecolab, Inc.
- Environmental Defense Fund
- Georgia-Pacific Professional
- Green Seal, Inc.
- Healthy Schools Campaign
- JohnsonDiversey
- KIMCO Corporation
- Nyco Products Co.
- Procter & Gamble Professional
- Spartan Chemical Co., Inc.
- Staples, Inc.
- State of California
- State of Illinois
- Tennant Company
- Terrachoice Environmental Marketing
- U.S. EPA Design for the Environment
- U.S. EPA Indoor Environment Management
- U.S. Green Building Council
- Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

What opportunities are there to get involved or stay informed about IBEL?

While membership in the IBEL Core Committee is now closed, there will be additional opportunities to become involved in IBEL over the course of its development. If you or your organization would like to volunteer, participate in the pilot testing of IBEL, or to simply stay informed about IBEL by signing up for the IBEL mailing list, drop us an e-mail at info@Ecoform.com.

Where can I get more information?

For more information visit the Ecoform website at www.Ecoform.com or contact Jack Geibig directly at info@Ecoform.com.

