

# New Standard for Green Laundry

## GS-51

By Deri Ross Pryor

**G**reen Seal, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping consumers choose sustainable products through rigorous research and a certification systems, has published a new standard related to our industry: GS-51 Laundry Care Products for Industrial and Institutional Use. This standard is relatively new, its first edition being published in January of this year. In light of that, ALM has done some preliminary research into the standard and contacted Green Seal for some insight on what it means for our members and industry.

### What is Green Seal?

“Green Seal is a non-profit organization that uses science-based programs to empower consumers, purchasers and companies to create a more sustainable world.” (from [www.green seal.org](http://www.green seal.org)) Started in 1989, it is the first organization to develop environmental certification programs in the U.S.

### What is its purpose?

Green Seal promotes green living and a culture of sustainability through standards that affect the marketplace and ultimately individual lives through healthier living.

### What is GS-51?

GS-51 is a standard that sets forth parameters for environmentally conscious products used in industrial and institutional laundry facilities. It is important to note that this standard applies to products only. Laundry facilities that utilize these products or the manufacturers of the products themselves are not certified.

### From the published standard:



.....  
**Deri Ross Pryor** is a staff writer with ALM.



This standard covers and is limited to laundry detergent (complete detergent or multi-component system) for industrial and institutional use, as well as pre-treatment stain and spot removing products, fabric softeners (liquids and sheets), anti-static products (liquid and sheets), fabric refresher products, anti-wrinkle products, laundry prewash products, and laundry starch/sizing/fabric finish products. This standard addresses the products listed above but not the facility where laundry care occurs, such as a dry cleaner or commercial laundry. The standard also does not address any equipment, equipment maintenance, or processes used at a laundry (e.g. ozone generation/use). The solvent used at a dry cleaner is considered part of the process; therefore, it is also excluded.

To read the [GS-51](#) in its entirety:

## How was GS-51 developed?

Development of the standard began in 2011 with the final published draft being issued on January 23, 2013. According to Mark T. Petruzzi, Senior Vice President of Outreach & Strategic Relations for Green Seal, “the GS-51 standard was developed in accordance with ISO 14020 (Principles of Environmental Labeling) and ISO 14024 (Principles and Procedures for Type I Eco-labels) requirements.”

## How are products GS-51 certified?

Companies interested in having their products GS-51 certified must go through an application and evaluation process. There are fees for the evaluation that are tiered according to the company’s annual revenue and some discounts offered for dual certification and for manufacturers that already have Green Seal-certified products. For more information.

## How do consumers find GS-51 certified products?

Green Seal lists certified products according to the standard they fall under on their website.

Are there any government entities that are requiring facilities transition to GS-51 products?

According to Petruzzi:

*In addition to local, state and Federal purchasers, Green Seal-certified janitorial cleaning products are sought by K-12 schools, higher education, healthcare, green building programs and hospitality. After 23 years, Green Seal is one of the top three most widely recognized and utilized certifications (along with Energy Star and LEED) according to the Responsible Purchasing Network.*

As environmental awareness increases, green initiatives are becoming common. GS-51 appears to be a beneficial standard for consumers seeking to “go green.”

Although the laundry products standard is just a few months old, there have been a few citations already. Minnesota Request for Proposal 18466 for “Cleaning Compounds & Detergents for Dishwashers & Laundry Washers” wrapped up bidding in February. The environmental requirements in the RFP for laundry products are based

on the new GS-51 standard, and there are other states that are likely to have “green” laundry bids in the works for later this year. We’re also seeing interest/citations from healthcare, higher education and hospitality.

## What are the benefits to a facility for using GS-51 certified products?

“Much of the sustainability attention for laundry facilities currently focuses on energy efficiency and water conservation, which are certainly important considerations,” says Petruzzi. “The use of Green Seal-certified products in laundry operations would expand the sustainability focus to include the environmental and human health impacts of the products used.”

## Discussion Time

*We want to hear from you*

\* As a laundry professional would you consider changing to a GS-51 certified product?

\*Would your customers value your use of a GS-51 certified product?

\*As a manufacturer/distributor how will GS-51 impact you?

[Click Here](#) to join the discussion

1 LL

### New Standard for Green Laundry: GS-51

Earn one *Laundry & Linen Management* credit hour by [completing the quiz](#) over the material from this educational offering. To maintain ALM credentials individuals must submit proof of continuing education in laundry & linen specific programs every three years.

Access to contact hour quizzes are a benefit of membership in ALM

Check your current continuing education status [here](#)