



Design for the Environment

An EPA Partnership Program



Why partner with Design for the Environment?

The EPA DfE logo provides your customers with a meaningful mark of safer chemistry and product stewardship. Through partnership, your company will receive public, governmental recognition for formulation innovations that help protect human health and the environment. Your company name and DfE-labeled products will be listed on our website, and partnership products will be allowed to carry the DfE label.

Who has partnered with Design for the Environment?

Our partners include over 400 companies, manufacturing over 2,200 recognized products, who have invested heavily in the formulation of safer products. Retailers such as Wal-Mart and Home Depot encourage their suppliers to obtain the DfE label for products sold in their stores.



Design for the Environment partners with leading companies to make products safer for people and the environment.

The DfE logo differentiates recognized products in the marketplace. Consumers and retailers look for the DfE logo when making purchasing decisions. The logo allows purchasers to identify products that are safer for consumers and the environment. Market studies have shown strong awareness of and positive consumer response to the logo.

DfE partners with industry to create innovations in green chemistry. The program works with product developers and formulary chemists to develop chemically intensive products that are both innovative and effective—DfE-labeled products are not only safer for humans and the environment, they also work well!

The DfE logo means that a product contains only the safest chemicals. DfE approaches product “greening” as manufacturers do, by assessing ingredients according to their functionality and health and environmental profiles. DfE uses EPA’s technical tools and chemical expertise to identify the safest ingredients within functional classes. Only products that are made entirely from safer ingredients are allowed to use the DfE label.

Partnership with DfE demonstrates environmental stewardship. Many companies use integrated management systems to help ensure product safety and quality. While valuable, environmental stewardship through this mechanism may be difficult to communicate to shareholders, customers, NGOs, and the general public. Partnering with DfE—with its green chemistry and continuous-improvement focus—offers a clear measure of product stewardship and a powerful message on sustainability.

How can my company partner with Design for the Environment?

Formulators can partner with DfE on a product-by-product basis in accordance with this five step process:

1. Chemical Profiling of All Formulation Ingredients.

The partnership candidate submits a full ingredient disclosure, under confidentiality, to a qualified 3rd-party profiler, who compiles all available hazard information on each chemical and includes a detailed structure, physical-chemical properties, human health and environmental toxicology, and regulatory/administrative status.

Currently, profile services are provided by NSF International (contact Amy McDade at GreenChemistry@NSF.org; 734-827-5660) and Tox Services, LLC (contact Dr. Ann Marie Gebhart at amgebhart@toxservices.com; 202-429-8794).

2. Ingredient Assessment. Once 3rd-party profiling is completed, the formulator requests review by EPA DfE's Technical Review Team. The Team, a group of chemical-hazard-assessment experts from EPA's New Chemicals Program, reviews the candidate product(s) and ingredient profiles. The Team will assess each ingredient in the context of its functional class (e.g. surfactants in cleaning products), product-level attributes such as corrosivity, and may identify areas for improvement, safer alternatives, or additional information needs.

3. Dialogue on Assessment. Following the review, DfE and the formulator discuss the Team's recommendations. Reformulation of candidate products may be necessary. If the formulator successfully develops a product that qualifies for the DfE label, the formulator and DfE then discuss the terms of the partnership agreement.

4. Partnership Agreement. The partnership agreement documents the ingredients in each candidate formulation in a public, non-confidential manner. Agreements are tailored for the partner company and the DfE-labeled products, and may outline opportunities for continuous green-chemistry innovation. The agreement authorizes use of DfE recognition, including the DfE logo on partnership products.

5. Partnership Implementation. DfE and your company decide how to announce the partnership and plan near-term activities. DfE welcomes additional products for review and ideas on how to improve and strengthen the partnership program. DfE lists partners and DfE-labeled products on its website (<http://www.epa.gov/dfe/pubs/projects/formulat/formpart.htm>), and encourages partners to set up a page dedicated to DfE-labeled products on their website.

For more information, contact: DfESupport@abtassoc.com

What types of products carry the Design for the Environment label?

DfE allows the use of its label on Industrial/Institutional products as well as Consumer products in the following sectors: air conditioner coils, aircraft cleaners, all-purpose cleaners, athletic field paints, automatic dishwasher products, biological-based products, car care, carpet cleaners, conversion coatings, degreasers, deicers, dish soaps, floor care products, graffiti removers, granite/stone cleaners, hand soaps, inkjet printing products, laundry products, marine/RV cleaners, kitchen/countertop cleaners, leather cleaners, metal cleaners/polishes, odor removal products, oven/grill/barbecue cleaners, pavement treatments, pet care cleaning products, toilet bowl cleaners, tub/tile cleaners, upholstery cleaners, window/glass cleaners, wood cleaners, and other cleaners.

Where can I find a list of ingredients that meet DfE criteria?

The CleanGredients[®] database (www.cleangredients.org), developed by the Green Blue Institute, is designed to serve formulator needs for environmentally preferable raw materials while showcasing and marketing such ingredients for suppliers.