



South Coast Air Quality Management District

21865 Copley Drive, Diamond Bar, CA 91765-4182
(909) 396-2000 • www.aqmd.gov

PROGRAM INFORMATION

In spring 2007, the South Coast AQMD established an innovative voluntary certification program designed to help clean the air by increasing demand for ultra-low polluting commercial cleaning products.

Commonly used cleaning products can produce harmful smog-forming emissions, and the "Clean Air Choices" Cleaner Certification Program can help protect the health of workers and residents by encouraging the use of ultra-low polluting cleaning products.

The "Clean Air Choices" Cleaner Certification Program focuses on very low-polluting cleaning products used by maintenance and cleaning workers at commercial office buildings, schools, retail stores and hotels, as well as vehicle fleets.

The goal of the program is to increase recognition and use of existing qualifying products and to encourage manufacturers to develop additional qualifying formulations. The certification program is part of an overall strategy to reduce volatile organic compound (VOC) emissions from consumer products.

Cleaning products targeted for certification include floor care products; all purpose cleaners and degreasers; bathroom and tile cleaners; carpet and upholstery cleaners; automobile soaps; glass cleaners; and metal polishes and cleansers. However, any cleaning (household, janitorial or institutional) product that satisfies the criteria is eligible for consideration. The use of such products in commercial and industrial settings are responsible for about 2.5 tons per day of smog-forming VOC emissions – more than is emitted from the region's largest oil refinery in one day.

To qualify as a Clean Air Choice cleaner, a product must contain 10 grams per liter or less of VOCs. AQMD's certification, valid for three years, also requires products to contain less than one-tenth of one percent by weight of other harmful chemicals, including toxic air contaminants, hazardous air pollutants, and ozone-depleting and global warming compounds. Alternatively, a product that has been certified by an existing approved certification program, such as Green Seal, U.S. EPA Design for the Environment or EcoLogo can also be certified by AQMD if its VOC content is 10 grams per liter or less.

The program's VOC criteria is more stringent than existing California Air Resources Board requirements for such cleaning products sold in the state. The new program is modeled after AQMD's Clean Air Solvent Certification program established in 1996 for industrial cleaning solvents. Currently, 73 companies and more than 140 products are certified as a Clean Air Solvent.

Numerous federal, state and local institutional and commercial facilities have developed programs to require the use of environmentally preferable products, including the Los Angeles Unified School District and the City of Santa Monica.