

# USE LESS TOXICS



Materials used to build and maintain buildings can affect the health of employees. Items such as cleaning products, flooring, carpet, wall covering, ceiling tiles, furniture, and other wet products (adhesives, paints, etc.) can contain hazardous chemicals that affect the quality of the environment inside your business. Seek out the ingredients list by reading the label or asking the manufacturer for the material safety information.

When purchasing products, consider the following environmental criteria to create a healthier working environment.

## AVOID:

- Carcinogens, neurotoxins, mutagens or teratogens (products that are known to cause cancer, affect the brain or cause birth defects)
- Lead and mercury
- Volatile organic compounds (VOCs)
- Chlorofluorocarbon-containing refrigerants, solvents and other products
- Phosphates
- Corrosive, flammable, reactive, or irritation potential
- Polyvinyl chloride (PVC)
- Pesticides and herbicides

## CHOOSE:

- Biodegradable
- Biobased\*
- Low-emitting (chemicals) materials
- Nontoxic

*\*biobased = commercial or industrial items that are made of biological products such as agricultural (including plant, animal, and marine materials) or forestry materials.*

## RESOURCES

**GREENGUARD** Greenguard Environmental Institute is an independent, nonprofit organization that directs the GREENGUARD Certification Program, which tests low emitting products and materials. They were established specifically to address indoor air quality (IAQ) and the impact of building materials. The GREENGUARD Product Guide features products that meet acceptable IAQ pollutant guidelines and standards. For a list of products that are GREENGUARD certified, visit [www.greenguard.org](http://www.greenguard.org).

**GREEN SEAL** Green Seal is an independent, nonprofit organization that provides recommendations of environmentally preferable products published as Choose Green Reports. They identify and promote products that cause less toxic pollution and waste, and conserve resources and habitats. Evaluations are based on state-of-the-art science and information using internationally recognized methods and procedures. Visit [www.GreenSeal.org](http://www.GreenSeal.org).

**US EPA** The US Environmental Protection Agency and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health have information on specific toxic materials. Check out [www.cdc.gov/niosh/](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/) for more information.

**SCIENTIFIC CERTIFICATION SYSTEMS (SCS)** SCS is the nation's first third-party certifier of environmental and food safety achievements. Visit [www.scsertified.com](http://www.scsertified.com) for more information.