

RECYCLED PAINT:

Saving Money, Jobs, and the Environment

How can painting contractors save money, improve customer service, do something good for the environment, help reduce garbage rates and local taxes, and create California jobs?

The answer: Offer recycled paint.

Everyone is looking to cut expenses, but the last thing anyone can afford is to sacrifice quality for cost savings. That is why there's never been a better time to consider using recycled-content paint. Not only does it cost about 40% less than virgin paint, but buying a Green Seal certified paint means you get a product that has been rigorously tested and proven to perform by the Master Painters Institute (MPI). Using recycled paint also helps support green jobs, improves the economy, and utilizes a resource that would otherwise go to waste.

Leftover paint is a significant problem for California. Paint makes up approximately 50% by both weight and volume, of the hazardous wastes received at California public collection facilities and costs \$27 million dollars a year to manage. Creating market demand for recycled paint helps ensure an end-use for this valuable resource as well as reducing costs to local governments. Ultimately, this benefits businesses because as garbage ratepayers and taxpayers, you fund local government operated hazardous waste programs. The California Product Stewardship Council is working with the Counties of San Joaquin, Tehama and San Francisco on a \$400,000 grant funded by the Department of Resources Recovery and Recycling (CalRecycle) to develop a statewide product stewardship program for paint, which will be handed over and ultimately funded by the paint manufacturers. Encouraging the use of recycled-content paint is a primary goal of the grant project as the partners recognize that the future viability of the recycled paint market depends on consumer demand for recycled paint. We are fortunate to have two Green Seal certified paint remanufacturing plants in California: Visions Paint Recycling in Sacramento and Amazon Environmental in Riverside.

In the past, making "recycled" paint was nothing more than re-blending it into a "new" product that had marginal quality and limited color options. "As little as ten years ago, the technology and quality control did not exist and the product wasn't up to standards," acknowledges Jerry Noel, President of Visions Paint Recycling. "Similar to most recycled-content products, recycled latex paint has seen an evolution of quality based on the demand by its end users."

State Governments and the American Coatings Association saw the problem and worked for two years to develop the Green Seal recycled paint standard. To achieve Green Seal certification, the paint has to be filtered, pH tested, and more and ultimately must pass the same performance tests as virgin paint. Green Seal certification means that a product has been tested according to science-based procedures, that it works as well or better than others in its class, and that it has been evaluated without bias or conflict of interest.

Meeting these standards of quality and performance is no small achievement. Lorraine Segala, President of Amazon Environmental, said her company's recycled-content paint line has gone through rigorous testing to achieve Green Seal certification.

Offering paint with the Green Seal certification also provides a business advantage because it provides third-party corroboration of environmental claims and distinguishes a product from competitors that can't support their environmental assertions.

Green Seal Certification can help win bids, too. Visions was awarded contracts to provide recycled paint for the corridors of the Pentagon, offices at the California State Capitol building and the San Joaquin County Administration building. Jeremy Budish, Project Manager for Hensel Phelps Construction, the painting contractor on the San Joaquin Administration building project, attests to the performance of recycled-content paint. "We used the Visions product and found it to perform as well as virgin paint. We're pleased not only with the performance but also because we're using a product that's better for the environment and more sustainable," said Budish.

Customers who have used the paint are sold on the quality and price. "Ninety percent of our sales are to repeat customers," adds Segala. "Once they realize they can be green and save green, they keep coming back."

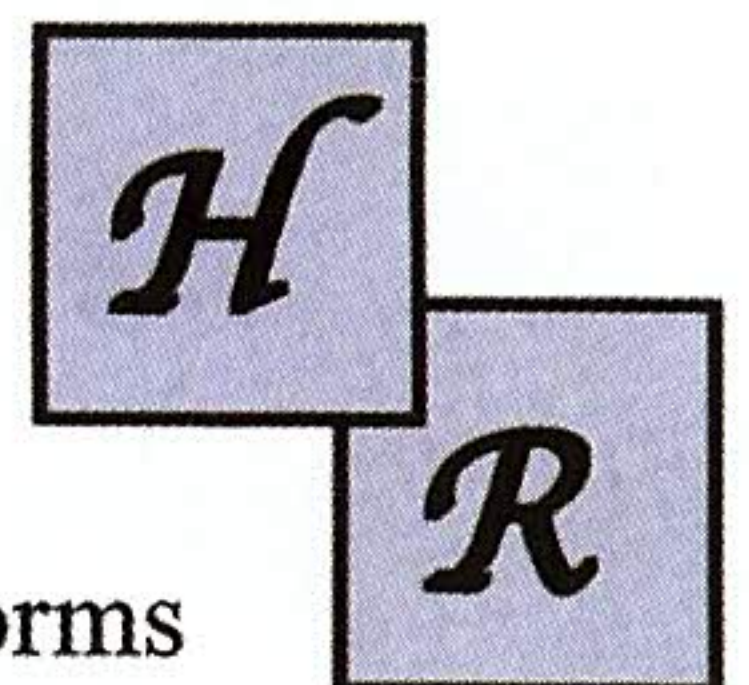
Gone are the days of limited selection, too. Both Visions and Amazon Environmental offer stock and custom colors. The products are available in flat, eggshell and semi-gloss for both interior and exterior use. Visions purchases used 5-gallon containers from a food service vendor so even the container is reused.

There's never been a better time to try recycled paint. You can help improve your company's "green" image, support green jobs, reduce taxpayer and ratepayer costs and improve the environment. It's not often you can do all that and save money too! ■

For more information on purchasing recycled-content paint, visit www.amazonpaint.com and www.visionspaintrecycling.com

For more information about the California Product Stewardship Council, go to www.calpsc.org

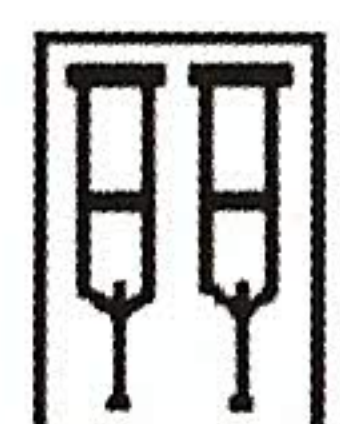
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