



Paint Purchasing Guide for Government

Why Use Recycled Paint?

Funded by a grant from the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) and supported by the following partners:



SF Environment
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- **Quality and Selection** — Recycled paint certified by Green Seal is [proven](#)ⁱ to perform to the same standards as virgin paint, per the [Master Painters Institute](#)ⁱⁱ Standards. It is available for both interior and exterior projects in many colors and sheens.
- **Lower Cost** — Recycled paint is often sold for far less than virgin paint because it is less expensive to recycle paint than it is to produce virgin paint from raw materials.
- **Environmental Benefits** — Most recycled latex paint is at least 50 percent recycled content. Purchasing recycled paint "closes the loop" so paint collected in recycling programs benefits the environment by becoming a reusable commodity.
- **It's Required** — The [Public Contract Code section 12203](#)ⁱⁱⁱ requires State agencies to purchase recycled paint containing at least 50% post-consumer paint. Local governments can also purchase off the [state contract](#)^{iv} but must submit the required [application](#)^v to the Department of General Services.

Paint Selection Criteria

- **Buy the Right Amount** — You'll save money and reduce waste. Use an online paint calculator to estimate how much paint to purchase (search using keywords "paint calculator").
- **Use only Green Seal (GS-43) Certified Recycled Paint** which has undergone extensive performance and environmental review. GS-43 meets all low-VOC criteria and contains a minimum 50% post-consumer recycled content. Use of low-VOC paint may also have the added benefit of fewer odors and less eye, nose, and respiratory irritation for the painters and building occupants.
- **Avoid Waste and Disposal Costs** — Avoid paint disposal costs by buying the right amount. Make the effort to donate or recycle leftover paint.

What is GS-43?



“**GS-43**”^{vi} is the Green Seal Standard for Recycled Latex Paint. It establishes environmental and performance requirements for recycled-content interior and exterior latex paints. For the purposes of this Standard, recycled-content latex paints are made by two distinct methods: consolidation and reprocessing.

- **Consolidated Paints** — Paint that contains a minimum of 95% post-consumer paint with a maximum of 5% secondary industrial or virgin materials.
- **Reprocessed Paints** — Paint that contains a minimum of 50% post-consumer paint, with a maximum of 50% secondary industrial or virgin materials.

The Green Seal 43 (GS-43) Standard tells buyers the recycled paint meets all applicable Master Painters Institute performance standards – *the same performance standards used for comparable virgin paint* in any given category.

Where to Find GS-43 Certified Recycled Paint

You can find GS-43 paint using the [Green Seal web site](#).^{vii}

Procurement Contract Language

- **Review procurement specifications** to ensure that outdated or unnecessary requirements do not exclude any recycled paint products from consideration.
- **Amend your specifications** to include recycled paint language. See sample language in the State Department of General Services (DGS) [Best Practices Manual for Environmentally Preferable Purchasing](#)^{viii} for buying recycled paint.
- **Include a paint-specific Extended Producer Responsibility clause**^{ix} in your agency’s Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) policy. Also, consider adding language in your contract that requires vendors to “take-back” unused paint.



More Information

- About recycled paint: (916) 323-3416 or condemo@CalRecycle.ca.gov
- About buying off the state contract: Timothy Smith (916) 375-4451 or Timothy.Smith@dgs.ca.gov
- About EPP: Kathy Frevert (916) 341-6476 or Kathy.Frevert@CalRecycle.ca.gov
- This document is available online at <http://www.calpsc.org/products/paint.html>

ⁱ <http://www.green.ca.gov/EPP/building/paint.htm#perf>

ⁱⁱ The Master Painters Institute (MPI) is a nationally recognized paint performance certification organization. <http://www.paintinfo.com>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/displaycode?section=pcc&group=12001-13000&file=12200-12217>

^{iv} <http://www.pd.dgs.ca.gov/contracts/UsingContracts.htm>

^v <http://www.pd.dgs.ca.gov/deleg/pamannual.htm>

^{vi} <http://www.greenseal.org/certification/environmental.cfm>

^{vii} http://www.greenseal.org/findaproduct/recycled_latex_paint.cfm

^{viii} <http://www.green.ca.gov/EPP/building/paint.htm>

^{ix} <http://www.calpsc.org/projects/SanJoaquin/EPR-Language-Final-Draft.pdf>