

GUIDEBOOK

Decoding sustainability of
abrasive paper backings

WE PURIFY AND PROTECT WITH EVERY FIBER... MORE THAN A STATEMENT, A BELIEF

Ahlstrom is a global leader in fiber-based specialty materials.

We are committed to a step change in sustainability across our operations and throughout the value chain. Our emission reduction strategy is in line with the 1.5°C Science Based Targets initiative.

IN ABRASIVES, WE MADE THE STRATEGIC CHOICE TO TREAT SUSTAINABILITY AS AN ACCELERATOR OF SUCCESS YEARS AGO

This policy has translated into bold choices at our abrasive papers production center in Arches, France. Hence, the elimination of formaldehyde from all of our papers as long ago as 2015 or our participation into the SEAM program as soon as it was launched as the first member in the supply chain.

Today we want to go even further. Our R&D efforts have intensified to find papers which allow you to optimize your production and your carbon footprint.

TOGETHER, WE CAN GO FURTHER

The sustainability-related features of products are an important aspect in helping end users to make more informed choices. Therefore, the information that we and you provide to end users and consumers about paper backing choices need to be clear, correct, relevant and substantiated.

Claims should help to provide stakeholders with information without misleading them. Tools like this guide, which elucidates the terms used to qualify papers, are just one of the ways we are trying to help you. It makes paper claims easier to understand and help you to see how they can apply to abrasive papers more specifically.

CLAIMS FOCUSED ON 4 MAIN AREAS

We have chosen to inform you about the key sustainability features of our products in 4 main areas

1		RAW MATERIALS Renewable certified materials / Recycled content / Biobased materials / Formaldehyde free /
2		RESOURCE AND FOOTPRINT Resource savings* / Material efficiency
3		END OF LIFE Recyclable / Industrial-Home Compostable / Biodegradable in soil
4		PURPOSE AND ENABLERS Healthier & people protection / Plastics replacement / Supply-chain simplification

**work-in-progress. If you are interested in partnering to share downstream supply chain info, reach out to us*

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GREEN CLAIMS

WHAT ARE GREEN CLAIMS ?

Green claims or environmental claims include any statements we are making about the environmental features of products.

This includes claims like “made from renewable raw materials” or “recyclable.”

Green claims can be in the form of words but also symbols, logos, images, colors or even product brand names can be seen as making a green claim.

WHY ARE THEY RELEVANT?

They provide helpful information to stakeholders to make more informed and environmentally beneficial decisions

- ▶ Be clear, truthful and indicate the relevant impacts

HOW TO MAKE SURE THEY ARE NOT MISLEADING?

Guidance help companies to follow the regulations and avoid unfair marketing practices.

Most of the guidance is still voluntary. Companies can interpret it differently and claims might be used and substantiated in multiple ways.

- ▶ Let's show leadership and build trust with stakeholders by communicating accurately.
- ▶ Follow the regulative landscape : The European Commission will soon release a proposal for Substantiating Green Claims to provide clarity around this area. The US Green Guide by FTC is also under revision.

Learn more about selected available guidance here:



FTC green guide USA



CMA guidance UK



UN guidelines



The European Union define green claims in the Guidance for the implementation/application of Directive 2005/29/EC as:




'Green claims refer to the practice of suggesting or otherwise creating the impression (in the context of a commercial communication, marketing or advertising) that a product or a service, is environmentally friendly (i.e. it has a positive impact on the environment) or is less damaging to the environment than competing goods or services. This may be due to, for example, its composition, the way it has been manufactured or produced, the way it can be disposed off and the reduction in energy or pollution which can be expected from its use.'



6 GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR MAKING CLAIMS



EXAMPLE

	DONT'S	DO'S	EXAMPLE
1	Make general and vague claims (environmentally friendly, sustainable, green, etc.)	Be specific, use qualified claims and substantiation that proves that product is a better choice when looking at the whole life cycle	 <p>TEX-STYLE™ is made with at least 70% renewable material</p>
2	Have no reliable backup material	Be prepared with scientific evidence : it is not required to include supporting information in communications be able to support claims - but should be available	 <p>FORMOL FREE</p> <p>A formaldehyde free paper => Lab evidence are available to show there is no formaldehyde content in papers</p>
3	Don't let a claim be open to interpretation: it can be deceptive even if it is true in theory	Use explanatory statements. Specify whether the claim is for product, packaging, or just a portion of the earlier, if it's not clear from the context.	 <p>Add your logo with your tracking code when authorized and precise to what the certification applies :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Packaging is FSC™ Mix Credit certified › Abrasive is made with FSC™ Mix Credit certified paper backing
4	Legal requirements should not be made as green claims : if a use of substance is banned by law, do not make a free of-claim about that substance		
5	Claims should not be based on the absence of an ingredient or feature that is never associated with the product category		
6	Features that are common to all or most products in the category should not be presented as unique characteristics of the product.		



SUSTAINABILITY AND ABRASIVE PAPER BACKINGS

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GREEN CLAIMS RELATED TO RAW MATERIALS



PAPER MADE WITH...



...BIOBASED MATERIAL

Biobased products are wholly or partly derived from materials of biological/natural origin, excluding materials embedded in geological formations and/or fossilized.

Examples: The percentage of biobased or renewable material used will have to be mentioned. You will have to specify if this applies for the base paper. Typical claim is «paper base contains 70% of biobased materials»

» **In Europe:** Those products are eligible for TUV Austria OK biobased certification

Sourcing of biobased materials: we want to hear what you think! What about having a range of products made entirely from biobased materials? Tell us here >



In a biobased approach, for our Blue Line latex papers, we would be using a «bio-binder», i.e. a natural-origin binder that provides cohesion to replace the synthetic latex products currently used.



...RENEWABLE RAW MATERIALS

Raw materials come from renewable biomass sources, e.g., wood. Not all biobased materials are renewable. Renewable material means it is managed to assure that it will not be depleted, and it will replenish.

Examples: There are different labels attesting renewability of pulp on the market : PEFC, SFI, FSC™.

Sourcing of abrasive papers with renewable pulp: All our abrasive paper backings can be with FSC™ Mix Credit label if you are also part of the FSC™ CoC to prove that the pulp used comes from well-managed forest and complies with the FSC™ standards.



...RECYCLED CONTENTS

The raw material used to manufacture recycled paper is waste paper from pre or post-consumer sources. There is no minimum content requirement but the % share of recycled content should be clearly communicated.

- » Post-consumer waste paper, meaning it has been used by end users.
- » Pre-consumer waste paper using papers from another application which have never reached the end users and have been diverted from the waste stream during a manufacturing process

Treating waste papers requires specific treatment steps on a paper machine. Recycled paper means also shortened fibers and lower mechanical properties. (like strength)

Examples: Typical recycled claim labels are: “contains 50% recycled fiber”, or “made with 15% post-consumer waste material”. The percentage of recycled content should be specified.

Sourcing of abrasive papers with recycled contents: we are currently exploring how we can incorporate recycled content and evaluating its real sustainable benefits. Contact estelle.seibert@ahlstrom.com to learn about the results of the initial tests.



GREEN CLAIMS RELATED TO END OF LIFE

RECYCLABLE



Knowing which of our papers are recyclable is of particular interest when it comes to sorting your waste.

TECHNICALLY RECYCLABLE/REPULPABLE

The product can be repulped in an industrial-scale recycling process, in either a standard recycling mill or a specialized recycling mill. It is considered to be technically recyclable, but what determines real recyclability is the final product composition and end-use.

Examples: All of our papers, apart from the WET family and TEX-STYLE™, are today technically recyclable.

RECYCLABLE

A final product that is allowed in collection, sorting (where applicable), reprocessing and has a new product application at scale. To be considered fully compatible, it should have no disturbing components that negatively affect the recycling process.

› **In Europe:** should comply with EN13430 standard.

› **In the US:** can be tested with the Western Michigan University test.



What if tomorrow's abrasives were compostable?

If you have made it this far, you'll be interested to know that there are two levels of compostability

1 INDUSTRIALLY COMPOSTABLE

Products that can degrade in an industrial composting facility within a set length of time according to a defined standard. In addition, the product must not contain hazardous substances or have any negative effects on compost quality.

› **In Europe:** should be tested according to standard EN13432. Can be certified by TUV Austria

› **In the US:** should be tested according to standard ASTM D6400. Can be certified through the Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI®) or the Compost Manufacturing Alliance (CMA).

2 HOME COMPOSTABLE

Products that can degrade in a garden compost heap within a set length of time without additives or using additional heat. This claim is perfect to qualify a product as biodegradable.

› **In Europe:** eligible for TUV Austria's 'Ok compost home' label

› **In the US:** Home Compostable certification not currently available under a United States standard. However, Ahlstrom is actively participating in community compost trials.

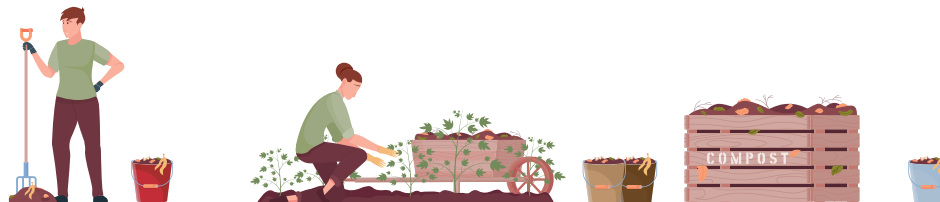
BIODEGRADABLE IN SOIL

Did you know that biodegradable products are not necessarily compostable ?

Biodegradable products can be converted into CO₂, H₂O, biomass or minerals by micro-organisms. The speed of degradation depends on the medium (soil, water, marine water, compost). There are several standards to measure biodegradation in different media. Biodegradation is part of compostability requirements.

› **In Europe:** should be tested according to standard EN 13432. 2. If it passes a compostability test, it is biodegradable in soil.

› **In US:** needs to be tested according to ASTM standard. BPI certification for compostability includes testing for biodegradability.



PAPER BACKINGS LOWERING THE IMPACT ON THE WHOLE VALUE-CHAIN

Some papers can reach their full potential while using energy sparingly, cutting out some treatment steps in the transformation chain, or replacing fossil-based materials like polyester cloth and films.

An Eco-Design tool for sustainable innovations and products

To ensure that the products we invent and develop truly meet the sustainability expectations of our customers, we apply an Eco-Design tool to assess the sustainability performance of the product.

In essence the tool comprises a template with various pre-set environmental criteria for which the environmental performance of the product in development is measured against a reference.

The sustainability performance is measured against 23 criteria grouped in 7 categories: Chemicals, Materials, Energy, Water, Emissions, Use and functionalities, End of life.

Our goal is to have a systematic process-based approach to provide evidence of improved sustainability performance in existing products. In parallel we are rolling out specialized LCA Software (GaBi) to support deeper life cycle assessments (LCA) analysis and open doors to cooperation in order to assess impacts throughout the value chain.



Let's exchange experience to make the study relevant for the whole value chain!
 Contact : estelle.seibert@ahlstrom.com

EZ-BOND

► Ready-to-use alternatives to saturating papers to be lean and address ongoing legislation changes on VOCs, thereby protecting workers and users

Raw materials	Resources and footprint	End of life	Purpose and enablers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Biobased materials (contains at least 80% of biobased materials) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Resource savings enablers (no extra energy consumptions related to impregnation) 	Recyclable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Health & people protection (no extra solvent emissions from paper base)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Certified renewable materials 	Material efficient	Industrial-Home Compostable	Plastics replacement
Recycled content		Biodegradable in soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Supply chain simplification (no extra oil impregnation needed, Less production steps due to drop in solution with low solvent emission level)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Formaldehyde-free 			



TEX-STYLE™

› Min 70% cellulose-based drop-in alternative to polyester-treated cloth used in the conversion of abrasive belts for sanding panel boards, stone, wood floors (dry), glass or metal (wet).

Raw materials	Resources and footprint	End of life	Purpose and enablers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Biobased materials (contains at least 70% of biobased materials) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Resource savings enablers (less resin)* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recyclable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health & people protection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Certified renewable materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Material efficient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial-Home Compostable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Plastics replacement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycled content 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodegradable in soil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Supply chain simplification (no additional treatment**)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Formaldehyde-free 			

“ To learn more about **TEX-STYLE™** ask Sander.” ”

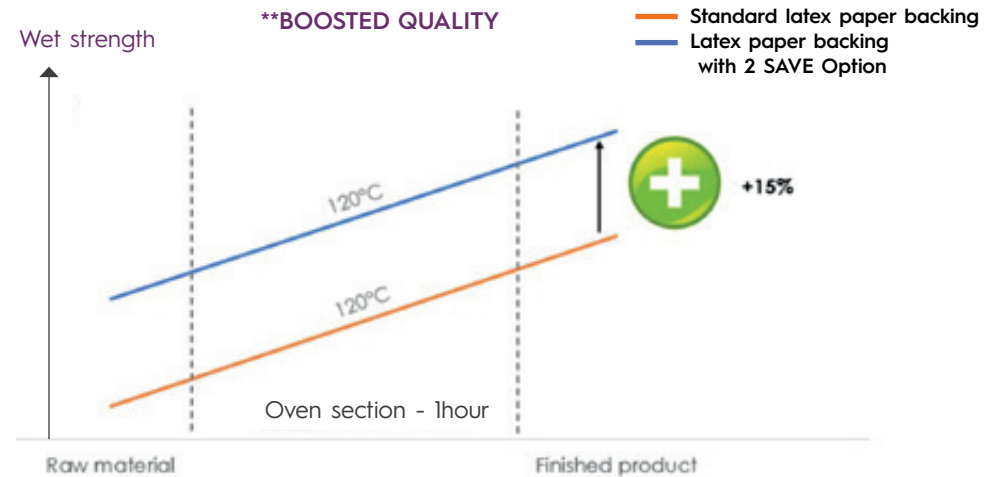
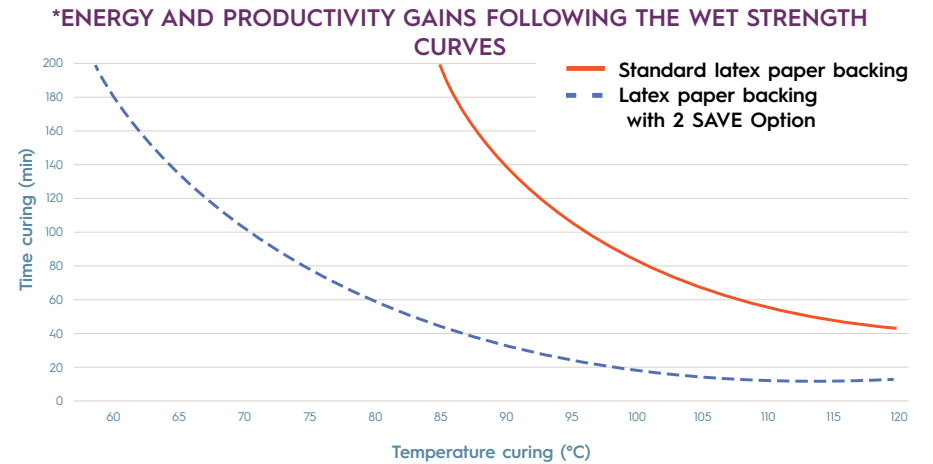


* Average 10% of saving according to customer feedback. Results depends on process.
 ** Versus grey cloth

2-SAVE FEATURE

› Design to upgrade the wet strength of our WET papers to open the door to energy savings with low-temperature bonding materials

Raw materials	Resources and footprint	End of life	Purpose and enablers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Biobased materials (contains at least 60% of biobased materials) ✓ Certified renewable materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Resource savings enablers* (less heating) ✓ Material efficient** 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recyclable Industrial-Home Compostable Biodegradable in soil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health & people protection Plastics replacement Supply chain simplification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycled content 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Formaldehyde-free 			



AHLSTROM & THE SEAM PROGRAM



UN LABEL TAILORED PRECISELY TO THE ABRASIVE END CONSUMER'S NEEDS

This label enables to identify abrasives made by sustainable processes in Europe.

SEAM is a program for sustainability in the European abrasives industry, created by FEPA, the Federation of European Producers of Abrasives.

The program has led to the SEAM label: a EU certification trade mark granted by the European Union Intellectual Property Office which helps to confirm to end users that they are buying a product which follows a supervised sustainable production process. SEAM members commit to at least six environmental, social and economic targets to bring more sustainability to the industry.

FEPA
In numbers



“ Because... a sustainable Supplier increases the Sustainability of your Products. ”

Discover our 7 targets committed within the SEAM program

Learn more about our company and its global RSE policy





www.ahlstrom.com/products/abrasive-backing/



contact.abrasives@ahlstrom.com



www.linkedin.com/company/ahlstrom



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