

EcoLogo to Certify Greener, Healthier Toys

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Parents, grandparents, and other toy purchasers across North America will soon be able to find toys that are greener and healthier for the children in their lives. The EcoLogo Program recently held its first 30-day comment period for the first draft of its Toy Standard (CCD 172) and is now in the process of review.

"Children's toys are a priority for the EcoLogo Program as there are no common criteria for environmentally sound toys and children's products in North America," says Dr. Angela Griffiths, Executive Director of the EcoLogo Program. The EcoLogo Toy Standard is intended to recognize the design and development of toy products that are the most environmentally sound on the market and which are produced in a way that is socially responsible.

Feedback from individuals and organizations on drafts of the Toy Standard is essential to ensure that the criteria reflect true environmental leadership in the marketplace.

Toys became an area of interest for the EcoLogo Program during the research phase of the 2009 Sins of Greenwashing study conducted by TerraChoice when the research revealed that there are no common criteria for environmentally-sound toys and children's products in North America. This research also showed a disproportionately high number of environmental claims on toy and baby products, when compared to other

consumer products in the study. EcoLogo product standards are designed to promote leadership by identifying those products that reduce environmental impacts by meeting criteria for: safer chemicals and materials; use of recycled and recyclable materials; and minimizing pollution generated by the production, use, and disposal of these products and their packaging.

The Standard currently includes play products made from wood, plastic, rubber, textiles, metals, and bio-based materials and excludes products made with: added fragrances; anti-bacterial or anti-microbial agents; heavy metals such as lead, cadmium or mercury; or substances or components that are known carcinogens, mutagens, or reproductive toxins.

The standard development process is being supported by Dr. Sally Edwards, Director of the Sustainable Children's Products Initiative at the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production (University of Massachusetts, Lowell) and staff at the University of Tennessee Center for Clean Products, leaders in the development of environmental product and material standards.

Comments or questions about this Toy Standard development process can be emailed to Katherine Stewart at: kstewart@ecologo.org or (800) 478-0399 or (613) 247-1900 ext. 231.