

**Specification for Environmentally Preferable Furnishings in Health Care**

*Comments Due by October 31, 2012*

*We are seeking comments on a draft environmental specification for health care furnishings from members and partners of Practice Greenhealth. This specification is designed to provide a valuable supply chain tool for purchasers in health care who are not familiar with the environmental attributes associated with various products used in health care. This is one specification of many we are preparing for 2012.*

*Please submit comments by email to* [*gsc@practicegreenhealth.org*](mailto:gsc@practicegreenhealth.org) *using track changes. Please include names of individuals, credentials and their affiliations who participated in this review for recognizition as technical reviewers.*

*We have not assessed whether or not products exist on the market meeting this specification and invite responses that may provide insight into available products.*

*The key environmental attributes outlined in the* [*Healthier Hospitals Initiative’s Safer Chemicals Challenge*](http://healthierhospitals.org/hhi-challenges/safer-chemicals) *have been incorporated into this specification.*

*We also welcome suggestions on areas that would be important to address that are not included. If you have any questions, please send them to the email above. Confirmation responses will be sent when comments have been submitted.*

# Scope

* 1. This specification covers a broad range of furnishings supplied to health care facilities, including:
     1. waiting room and patient room furnishings
     2. medical treatment room furnishings
        1. exam tables
        2. patient recliners
        3. panel fabrics
        4. cubicle curtains
        5. window coverings
        6. fabric upholstery
        7. built-in or modular casework
        8. mattresses

This specification does not include electronic furnishings, those that plug in or have a battery as those components require additional criteria.

* 1. This specification also supports the Healthier Hospitals Initiative Safer Chemicals Challenge[[1]](#endnote-1) to purchase health care furnishings free of halogenated organic flame retardants, formaldehyde, perfluorinated compounds and polyvinyl chloride (PVC).

# Definitions

## Halogenated Organic Flame Retardants. Halogenated flame retardants are chemical compounds containing chlorine or bromine bonded to carbon. They are used in commercial and consumer products to meet flammability requirements.[[2]](#endnote-2).

## Dioxins. Refers to a group of toxic chemical compounds that share certain chemical structures and biological characteristics. Dioxins, in their purest form, look like crystals or a colorless solid. Most dioxins are not man-made or produced intentionally, but are created when other chemicals or products are made[[3]](#endnote-3).

## Phthalates. Phthalates are esters of phthalic acid mainly used as plasticizers (substances added to plastics to increase their flexibility, transparency, durability, and longevity). They are used primarily to soften polyvinyl chloride (PVC).

## Organotins. Heavy metals used to stabilize PVC to avoid degradation from heat and light during production.

## Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). Carbon compounds emitted as gases from certain solids and liquids. VOCs include a variety of chemicals, some of which may have short- and long-term adverse health effects. VOCs are emitted by a wide array of products numbering in the thousands.[[4]](#endnote-4)

# Perfluorinated Compounds (PFCs). Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), Perfluoroalkyl sulfonate (PFAS), Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) are a range of organic carboxylic acid or sulfonic acid structures consisting of eight or more carbons that are fluorinated to lesser or greater extents. One of the ways they are used is as a surface treatment to provide soil, oil, and water resistance to personal apparel and furnishings

# Required Product-Specific Environmental Criteria for Furnishings

## Facilities Compliant with Applicable Laws. Products supplied shall be manufactured in facilities compliant with all applicable laws and regulations and have had no violations in the last three years.

*Required Documentation:*

*Bidder must submit a formal declaration stating that products offered were manufactured in a facility that is compliant with applicable laws and regulations and has had no violations in the last three years. The declaration must be written, signed, and dated on the manufacturer’s letterhead by the manufacturer and state that they have had no violations in the last three years.*

## Halogenated Organic Flame Retardants. Products supplied must contain less than 1000 ppm halogenated organic flame retardants by weight of the homogenous material.

*Required Documentation:*

*Bidder must submit complete and unabridged test results from a CPSC-accredited third party laboratory in which “destructive testing” verifies that acceptable limits are met for the products supplied.*

## Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC). Work surface edging, surface barriers and other components shall not be made from polyvinyl chloride (PVC).

*Required Documentation:*

*Bidder must submit a formal declaration stating that the products supplied do not contain polyvinyl chloride (PVC). The declaration must be written, signed, and dated on the manufacturer’s letterhead by the manufacturer.*

## Formaldehyde/Volatile Organic Compounds. Products supplied shall meet the indoor air quality requirements of California Special Environmental Requirements, Section 01350, updated with the California Department of Public [Health Standard Method for Testing and Evaluation for Volatile Organic Chemical Emissions from Indoor Sources Using Environmental Chambers, Version 1.1.](http://www.calrecycle.ca.gov/greenbuilding/specs/section01350/#CDPH%20Standard%20Practice%20for%20VOC%20Testing) (CDPH/EHLB/M-55 Standard Method 1.1) as determined by independent laboratory testing and using the standard office building furniture protocol parameters.

*Required Documentation:*

*Bidder must submit test results from an accredited testing lab that followed the Standard Method for Testing and Evaluation of VOC Emission from Indoor Sources Using Environmental Chambers, Version 1.1 demonstrating products meet indoor quality requirements. The following programs utilize or meet the Section 01350 requirements for compliance[[5]](#endnote-5):*

* *GREENGUARD® Children and Schools*
* *Scientific Certification Systems Indoor Advantage Gold*
* *MTS SMART Building Standard*

## Perfluorinated Compounds (PFC). Products supplied shall not contain water proofing treatments that contain perfluorinated compounds including Chlorofluorocarbons (CFC), Hydrofluorocarbons (HCFC) and blends including Perflourooctanoic Acid (PFOA), [perfluorooctanesulfonic acid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perfluorooctanesulfonic_acid) (PFOS) and other compounds.

*Required Documentation:*

*Bidder must provide complete and unabridged test results from a CPSC-accredited third party laboratory which verifies the absence of perfluorinated compounds. The declaration must be written, signed, and dated on the manufacturer’s letterhead by the manufacturer.*

# Desirable Product Specific Environmental Criteria

* 1. **Phthalates**. Products supplied shall be free of intentionally added phthalates, including DEHP, BBP, DnHP, DIDP and DBP.

*Required Documentation:*

*Bidder must provide complete and unabridged test results under EN 14372:2004 from a Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)-accredited third party laboratory which verifies compliance with provisions in the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA).*

## Organotins. Products supplied shall not contain organotins, including tri-substituted organotin, dibutyltin (DBT) compounds, dioctyltin (DOT) compounds with concentrations greater than 0.1% by weight of tin.

*Required Documentation:*

*Bidder must provide a complete and unabridged test results from a CPSC-accredited third party laboratory that verifies compliance with LEED for Health Care for Organotins.*

## Heavy Metals. Products supplied shall not contain heavy metals in the fabrics or dyes including lead, mercury, and hexavalent chromium greater than 1000ppm, and antimony, arsenic, cadmium, chromium, cobalt, copper, and nickel compounds.

*Required Documentation:*

* *Bidder must provide complete and unabridged test results from a CPSC-accredited third party laboratory that verifies compliance with LEED for Health Care for arsenic, cobalt copper, nickel and cadmium and EU RoHS for lead, mercury, hexavalent chromium.[[6]](#endnote-6)*
* *Bidder must provide complete and unabridged test results under US EPA Method 3052:1996 from a CPSC-accredited third party laboratory which verifies the absence of antimony.*

## Chlorinated Bleaching Agents. Products supplied shall be manufactured without the use of chlorine or chlorine containing compounds that are potentially damaging to the environment. Preferred products use a Totally Chlorine Free bleaching process.

*Required Documentation:*

*Bidder must provide complete and unabridged test results under ISO 11480 from a CPSC-accredited third party laboratory which verifies the absence of chlorine bleaching agents.*

## Antimicrobials. Products shall not contain intentionally added antimicrobials on the surface or other parts of the products. Our organization wishes to avoid products with antimicrobials because of their overuse and as a contributing factor to growing antimicrobial-resistant bacterial infections.[[7]](#endnote-7)

*Required Documentation:*

*Bidder must submit a formal declaration stating whether or not this product contains antimicrobials. The declaration must be written, signed, and dated on the manufacturer’s letterhead by the manufacturer.*

# Wood Components

## If the product contains wood or wood-based materials, the wood shall be reclaimed, salvaged or certified wood coming from a sustainably harvested forest.

*Required Documentation*

* 1. *Bidder shall provide proof the wood materials in the product are certified to have been sustainably harvested by reclamation, salvage or certified wood. Acceptable certifications include the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) or other program that meets or exceeds FTC criteria.*

1. **Packaging Requirements**
   1. Product’s primary and secondary packaging shall contain postconsumer recycled materials or be recyclable (meaning it can be collected, separated or otherwise recovered from the solid waste stream for reuse, or in the manufacture or assembly of another package or product, through an established recycling program).
   2. Product shall not be packaged with polystyrene (Styrofoam™) or polyvinyl chloride (PVC) materials in the primary or secondary packaging materials.

*Required Documentation:*

*Bidder must submit a formal declaration stating whether or not this product meets the specified packaging requirements. The declaration must be written, signed, and dated on the manufacturer’s letterhead by the manufacturer.*

1. **Product End-of-Life and Take-Back Programs**
   1. Preference will be for products that are easily disassembled for refurbishment, repair and reuse.
   2. Preference will be for suppliers who offer Take Back or “Green Leasing” Programs to ensure products are responsibly handled at the end-of-life through reuse, recycling, and composting.

*Required Documentation:*

*Bidder must submit a formal declaration stating whether or not this product falls under a Tack Back Program or has been manufactured for ease of disassembly with an explanation outlining how it meets 7(a). The declaration must be written, signed, and dated on the manufacturer’s letterhead by the manufacturer.*

1. **Required Corporate Environmental Responsibility**
   1. [Our organization] prefers manufacturers who demonstrate a commitment to improving the environment and the products they produce. Manufacturers must have an environmental management plan or policy that guides programs and addresses overall corporate environmental stewardship.

*Required Documentation:*

*Bidder must provide a copy of their environmental management plan or policy or the URL where the plan or policy can be found.*

***Reviewers of Hospital Furnishings Specification:***

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1. [Healthier Hospitals Initiative](http://healthierhospitals.org/) [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Halogenated Flame Retardant chemicals, Green Science Policy Institute, <http://www.greensciencepolicy.org/halogenated-flame-retardant-chemicals>, Accessed June 2012. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Dioxins and Furans, EPA Fact Sheet, <http://www.epa.gov/osw/hazard/wastemin/minimize/factshts/dioxfura.pdf>, Accessed June 2012 [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. An Introduction to Volatile Organic Compunds (VOCs), EPA, <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/voc.html>. Accessed July 2012. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Based on Pharos Project Research, <http://www.pharosproject.net/framework/score/catid/17> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. [LEED for Health Care](http://www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=1765) [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Practice Greenhealth. Environmental Considerations for Furniture and Medical Furnishings. 1.4.10 [↑](#endnote-ref-7)