



## Choose GECA for better paints

Choosing the right paint goes a lot further than deciding on the right colour and gloss. Standard paint formulations can have a range of negative impacts on the environment and human health. Anything from production processes to ingredients used can be harmful to the environment. For example, paints with organic solvents emit volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which contribute to indoor air pollution and can trigger allergies and asthma.

When a product is certified against Good Environmental Choice Australia (GECA)'s Paints and Coatings standard, consumers can be sure that the product has been assessed to meet environmental, human health and ethical impact criteria. GECA certification removes doubt and confusion and makes identifying environmentally and socially preferable products easier.

Products covered by the standard include general interior and exterior architectural paints, other water based coatings, and student or artists' paints.

Products certified under GECA's Paints and Coatings standard also contribute towards achieving credit points for projects being certified under the Green Building Council of Australia's Green Star 'Design and As-Built' and 'Interior' tools.

Find GECA certified paints and coatings on our [website](#). If your favourite product is not listed, why not ask them to get certified.

### Why buy GECA certified products?

#### Better for the environment

- Lower waste generation and resource consumption
- Known ozone-depleting substances are banned
- Water emissions must be responsibly managed
- Responsible use of titanium dioxide, zinc oxide and lithopone reduces the environmental impact of sourcing these ingredients

#### Better for human health

- No harmful glycol ethers
- Minimised VOC (volatile organic compounds) content
- No known carcinogens, mutagens or reproductive toxins as ingredients
- No prohibited substances, including formaldehyde and toluene

#### Better for ethical considerations

- No unsubstantiated claims (greenwashing)
- Workers can expect fair pay, equal opportunity, and a safe working environment

[www.geca.org.au](http://www.geca.org.au)



## The GECA paints and coatings standard

	Key criteria	Concerns	GECA Standard
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Titanium dioxide, zinc oxide and lithopone</li> </ul>	Production uses large amount of energy and generates large quantities of waste.	Limits on the amounts of these compounds in the final product.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ozone depleting substances</li> </ul>	Destruction of the ozone layer reduces the absorption of biologically harmful UV radiation.	CFCs, HCFCs and other known ozone-depleting substances are banned.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water emissions</li> </ul>	Improperly managed water emissions can have harmful environmental effects.	Manufacturers must report the amount and destination of all water emissions from the production site.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waste minimisation</li> </ul>	Overconsumption of resources and generation of waste can have a significant impact on the environment.	Effective waste minimisation policies and procedures must be in place.  At least 97% of material inputs (i.e. ingredients) must result in saleable product.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chemical storage</li> </ul>	Improper storage of chemicals can lead to environmental harm via leaks, spills and emissions to water and air.	The manufacturer must properly store all chemicals in a responsible manner.
Human Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Glycol ethers</li> </ul>	Many have been identified as harmful for human health.	Glycol ethers banned or heavily restricted.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Volatile organic compounds</li> </ul>	VOCs may contribute to poor indoor air quality and trigger allergies, asthma and headaches.	Paints must be water-based and VOC content is limited.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hazardous materials</li> </ul>	Short, medium and long term risks to human health and the environment.	Products must not be classified as harmful, toxic, or sensitising. Substances known to cause cancer, genetic mutations and reproductive damage are banned.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prohibited substances, including formaldehyde and toluene</li> </ul>	Can have detrimental effects to the health of manufacturing staff and users of the finished product, as well as the health of the environment.	Formaldehyde, phthalates, bisphenol A, toluene, and other substances are banned. Restrictions on use of halogens and volatile aromatic hydrocarbons.
Ethical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human rights</li> </ul>	Safe working conditions, fair and equal opportunities should be available to workers.	Requirements for workplace safety, fair pay and equal opportunity.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legal compliance</li> </ul>	Organisations must comply with required local and international laws and regulations.	Requirements for lawful conduct and environmental compliance.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental claims</li> </ul>	Claims must be true and substantiated – greenwashing is not acceptable.	All claims must be true and substantiated.

For full list of criteria, refer to the **GECA Paints and Coatings Standard (PCv2.2ii-2012)**.

GECA runs Australia's only independent, not-for-profit, multi-sector ecolabelling program and is the only Australian member of the Global Ecolabelling Network. It develops standards against which products can be independently audited by GECA's JAS-ANZ accredited conformity assessment bodies. Its standards are developed following ISO14024 principles for global best practice in ecolabelling. More information is available at [www.geca.org.au](http://www.geca.org.au).

