OEKO-TEX®
INSPIRING CONFIDENCE
ECO PASSPORT

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX®

The textile and clothing industries are changing with great speed. Industry associations and NGOs are prodding all elements of the supply chain to adhere to more rigorous and responsible chemical management systems. Brands and retailers, concerned with their reputation and public image, are asking suppliers to provide additional disclosures that chemicals used in their products pose no human or environmental risk. The international OEKO-TEX® Association is proud to offer ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX® as a trusted answer to these chemical disclosure concerns. ECO PASSPORT is a three-step process by which manufacturers of textile processing chemicals and chemical compounds are able to transparently confirm that their products meet the criteria for environmentally responsible textile and leather production, all while maintaining confidentiality for their proprietary information. We look forward to working with the textile and clothing industry to implement and expand this important certification throughout the supply chain.

Georg Dieners
Secretary General | OEKO-TEX® Association

BASICS

1 The ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX® system
2 Target groups
3 Benefits for chemical manufacturers
4 Apply for ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX®
5 The ECO PASSPORT for traders and resellers

CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

6 Purpose of the unique certification number
7 Validity of a certificate
8 The OEKO-TEX® Buying Guide
9 Duration of the certification process
10 Costs involved
11 Disclosure of confidential recipes
12 RSL and MRSL verification
13 Proof of certification
14 Product Stewardship measures

TECHNICAL TERMS AND DETAILS

15 Comparison of OEKO-TEX® chemical restrictions
16 ECO PASSPORT and STANDARD 100 by OEKO-TEX® limit values
17 Chemical groups and categories
18 One certificate for different products
19 ECO PASSPORT and STANDARD 100 product classes
20 ECO PASSPORT and STeP by OEKO-TEX®
21 STANDARD 100 certification covers additional aspects
22 MRSL ZDHC Conformance

OTHER

23 ECO PASSPORT vs other comparable market solutions
24 Further information
25 About OEKO-TEX®

»» What is an ECO PASSPORT certification? ««

ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX® is an independent testing and certification system for chemicals, colourants and auxiliaries used to manufacture textiles and leathers. A three-stage verification process analyses whether the chemical products and each individual ingredient meet specific requirements with regard to sustainability, safety and compliance with statutory regulations.

STAGE I Chemical products are screened at ingredient level against the list of chemi cals of concern from ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX®.

STAGE II Analytical test in our OEKO-TEX® laboratories to ensure that the certified products can be used for the sustainable production of human-ecological optimised textiles.

STAGE III (optional) Verification of product stewardship measures regarding the working conditions and environmental management (assessment and On-Site Visit).

2 Target groups

›› Who can apply for an ECO PASSPORT certificate? ‹‹

Any textile and/or leather chemical manufacturer can apply for the ECO PASSPORT certification. The ECO PASSPORT is applicable to chemical products (textile and leather chemicals, colourants and auxiliaries) as well as their preparations which are foreseen to be used in the textile, leather, clothing and/or closely related industries. For traders and resellers of chemicals special conditions apply. Information about applying for the ECO PASSPORT certification is available at: www.oeko-tex.com.

3 Benefits for chemical manufacturers

›› What are the benefits for the producer of an ECO PASSPORT certified product? ‹‹

The ECO PASSPORT certificate proves that ECO PASSPORT certified textile and leather chemicals do not contain in serious concentrations harmful substances that are mentioned on the STANDARD 100 by OEKO-TEX® Restricted Substance List (RSL). The analytical verification of the textile or leather chemical product ensures that harmful substances of the STANDARD 100 and LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® RSL are not present in critical concentrations and thus the ECO PASSPORT certified chemicals are approved in the production of STANDARD 100 and LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® certified products. Furthermore, via the ECO PASSPORT RSL and MRSL screening process it is checked that the product components declared by the applicant are not mentioned on the STeP by OEKO-TEX® Manufacturing Restricted Substance List (MRSL) and the SVHC candidate list of REACH. The recognition of the OEKO-TEX® Association as a third-party verifier by the ZDHC organisation with the ECO PASSPORT confirms ZDHC MRSL conformity at Level 3, which is the highest ranking in the current program.

4 Apply for ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX®

›› How can I apply for the ECO PASSPORT? ‹‹

You have two options to get started. Contact one of our OEKO-TEX® member institutes or simply fill out the application form at www.oeko-tex.com.

5 The ECO PASSPORT for traders and resellers

›› Can traders/resellers of chemicals apply for certification? ‹‹

An authorised trader or reseller, who is buying an ECO PASSPORT certified product and reselling it under a different trade name without additional formulation changes, will be able to hold an ECO PASSPORT certificate for a base fee only. If no ECO PASSPORT certificate is currently available, please contact our OEKO-TEX® member institutes.

6 Purpose of the unique certification number

›› Every ECO PASSPORT certificate has a unique certificate number. What is the purpose of this number? ‹‹

Each issued ECO PASSPORT certificate has an individual certificate number. The certificate number is a unique identification number, which is linked with the specific scope and validity of the ECO PASSPORT certificate. The validity and the products covered by the certificate can be verified by entering the certificate number into the ECO PASSPORT website: www.oeko-tex.com.

7 Validity of a certificate

›› What is the validity period of an ECO PASSPORT certificate? ‹‹

An ECO PASSPORT certificate is valid for one year (12 months) from the issue date. A certificate renewal can be applied for up to three months before the end of the validity.

›› What is the OEKO-TEX® Buying Guide? ‹‹

The OEKO-TEX® Buying Guide is the Web portal for sourcing pre-certified materials and substances. This is the well-known OEKO-TEX® preferred substance /material list for all OEKO-TEX® certified materials. For the ECO PASSPORT the preferred substance list indicates textile chemicals, colourants and auxiliaries which are certified. This platform is publically available and allows purchasing manufacturers or brand designers to source certified textile and leather materials and textile chemicals from verified certificate holders. The database includes an ECO PASSPORT search function to look for:

› **Trade name**
› **Chemical group and category**

Please find more information at www.oeko-tex.com.

9 Duration of the certification process

›› How long does it take to receive an ECO PASSPORT certificate? ‹‹

The complete ECO PASSPORT certification process typically takes two to four weeks for STAGES I and II once the application is complete and samples are received. Based on the complexity of the applying product the certification process can be conducted within a shorter or a longer period. For more details please contact your OEKO-TEX® partner institute. The STAGE III On-Site Visits run parallel to STAGES I and II but might take longer depending on the results of the assessment and On-Site Visits as well as whether any follow-up-visits are required.

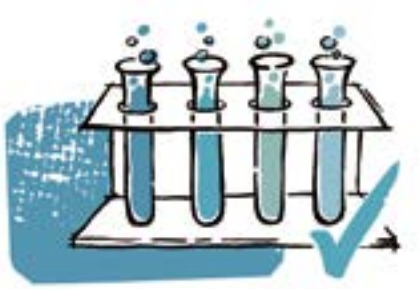
10 Costs involved

›› What are the costs for an ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX®? ‹‹

The costs for an ECO PASSPORT certification depend on the amount of chemical products and their specific grouping. The RSL/MRSL screening, as well as the right to label ECO PASSPORT products is covered within the base fee. The costs for the On-Site Visit in the third stage must also be added. Additional variable costs are generated by the laboratory tests, which are based on the products to be tested, the number of products and a customized testing program.

» My recipe is confidential. Do I have to share it? «

The OEKO-TEX® Association recognises that chemical recipes including bills of substances (BoS) are highly valued, proprietary information. OEKO-TEX® makes every effort to treat the information as highly confidential. However, OEKO-TEX® requires the publication of all constituent substances and known contaminants / by-products that are regulated by OEKO-TEX® or that are classified as hazardous in accordance with GHS or article 57 of the REACH regulation 1907/2006. By declaring all constituent substances and contaminants, the testing effort is reduced as are the costs for the second stage of the certification process.The information a chemical producer provides is encrypted and stored by the certifying institute and the OEKO-TEX® Association.



12 RSL and MRSL verification

» What does RSL/MRSL screening mean? «

The Restricted Substance List (RSL) and Manufacturing Restricted Substance List (MRSL) screening is a CAS number by CAS number comparison. We compare the substances provided by the ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX® applicant with the OEKO-TEX® Chemicals of Concern list – already covering the ZDHC MRSL – and the SVHC list of REACH.

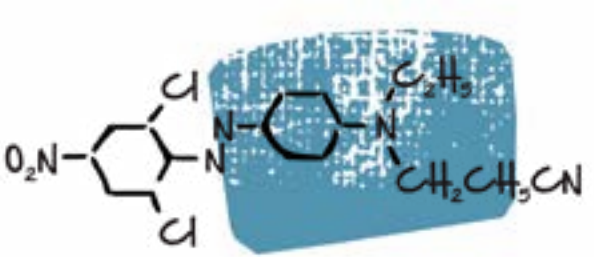
13 Proof of certification

» What does a certified company receive to document certification? «

A certified company will receive a report of the RSL/MRSL screening, an analytical test report, a report on the findings from On-Site Visit and an ECO PASSPORT certificate. The certificate includes a unique identification number, a validity date and a list of the products covered by the certificate.

›› Which measures should be guaranteed with regard to product responsibility and process safety? ‹‹

The chemical producer should be able to prove, during On-Site Visit, that the requirements related to environmental management systems, waste water and waste disposal, as well as the obligations relating to the guidelines for health and safety are met.



» What is the difference between the chemical restrictions in ECO PASSPORT, STeP, STANDARD 100 and LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX®? «

Each of the OEKO-TEX® products has been created to satisfy a specific segment or need within the textile value chain. ECO PASSPORT, STeP, LEATHER STANDARD and STANDARD 100 by OEKO-TEX® each have different chemical restrictions. The ECO PASSPORT system is designed for textile chemicals only, STANDARD 100 by OEKO-TEX® is for textiles and textile accessories, LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® for leather products and STeP by OEKO-TEX® is for textile manufacturers.

In general, however, there is a great deal of similarity within the OEKO-TEX® systems, because the focus is on protecting the consumer, the worker and the environment from the negative impact of chemicals that are used in the textile industry. The chemicals and the threshold values included in ECO PASSPORT address lots of harmful substances that may be used in textile production, not just those remaining on a finished textile. In this way a manufacturer using ECO PASSPORT certified chemicals can have confidence that the use of pre-certified chemical products will not cause any problems under foreseeable circumstances on the produced textiles for meeting the requirements of STANDARD 100, LEATHER STANDARD and STeP by OEKO-TEX®.

More information about these products and chemical requirements can be found at www.oeko-tex.com.

›› What are the threshold values for testing and why are some values higher than STANDARD 100 and LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX®? ‹‹

The list of chemicals and threshold values can be found here: www.oeko-tex.com.
The threshold values of chemicals included in the ECO PASSPORT certification are higher for some parameters than the finished product values of the STANDARD 100 by OEKO-TEX® certification. This matter is related to the fact that chemicals usually do not remain on the textile to the same extent as they are applied. These values have been set in order to ensure compliance of the finished textile with the requirements of STANDARD 100, LEATHER STANDARD and STeP by OEKO-TEX®. The threshold values for chemicals which are prohibited in either STANDARD 100, LEATHER STANDARD or STeP by OEKO-TEX® have been established based on legal requirements and our long-standing experience.

›› What does chemical group and category mean? ‹‹

A group consists of several categories that must have similar functional characteristics. Certification in accordance with the ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX® allows for different chemical groups.
These groups are put together in categories such as dispersion dyes for dyes or adhesives for equipment accessories. Individual test programmes are created on the basis of these categories. In addition, the categories allow certificates that cover the combination of chemical products.

18 One certificate for different product

» Products applying for an ECO PASSPORT contain different ingredients and concentrations. Can they all be covered by a single certificate? «

The applying chemical products need to be linked to a specific group and category during the application procedure. If different products are related to the same category, a single certificate for those chemical products can be issued. In addition, up to five products can be grouped together from different categories. The categories and chemical groups are defined in ECO PASSPORT Standard document (see ANNEX 5).

19 ECO PASSPORT and STANDARD 100 product classes

» Will ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX® certified chemicals meet all classes (I–IV) of STANDARD 100 by OEKO-TEX®? «

ECO PASSPORT certification has been designed so that a company using chemicals certified according to the standard can have confidence that they will meet the chemical requirements of STANDARD 100 and LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® (see ANNEX 4). Under some circumstances the ECO PASSPORT certificate will show the restrictions transparently and the parameters mentioned have to be checked on the finished textiles and leathers.

›› Will ECO PASSPORT certified chemicals meet all requirements of STeP by OEKO-TEX®? ‹‹

ECO PASSPORT requirements are aligned with the Manufacturing Restricted Substance List of STeP by OEKO-TEX®. This includes that substances of high concern are restricted to the intended use in manufacturing processes. The threshold values of the ECO PASSPORT are required to verify those requirements.

21 STANDARD 100 certification covers additional aspects

» If a textile or leather product is produced only with ECO PASSPORT certified chemicals, will testing be required for STANDARD 100 and/or LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® certification? «

A product produced with only ECO PASSPORT certified chemicals does not require a full test programme of the STANDARD 100 and/or LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® procedure. However the ECO PASSPORT process does not consider an additive or interactive effect of individual ECO PASSPORT certified chemicals used together or parameters influenced during the production process. The utilisation of ECO PASSPORT certified chemicals should be disclosed during the application process for STANDARD 100 and/or LEATHER STANDARD by OEKO-TEX® and will be taken into account.

22 MRSL ZDHC Conformance

» Are the ZDHC MRSL conformity requirements met with the ECO PASSPORT certification system? «

The ZDHC organisation recognises the ECO PASSPORT with STAGE III by OEKO-TEX® as a “MRSL Conformance Indicator Level 3”. The mandatory STAGES I and II lead to an automatic ZDHC conformance level 1. MRSL conformity, as defined in the latest ZDHC MRSL version, is fully covered by the certification process for the ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX®.

» What is the difference between ECO PASSPORT by OEKO-TEX® and other products available in the market? «

ECO PASSPORT combines the values and strength of three different verification stages to ensure the highest level of confidence on using and sourcing textile chemicals:

› **RSL / MRSL screening:** Quick assessment and compliance with legal requirements and OEKO-TEX®
› **Analytical verification:** Testing of contaminants and impurities
› **On-Site Visit:** Verification of production conditions and measures relating to safety, environment and occupational health

ECO PASSPORT is a new mechanism available on the market that combines these three critical stages to provide a high level of confidence and sustainability regarding chemicals of concern for buyers of textile chemicals. Including the ECO PASSPORT certified materials allows chemical suppliers and brands to design, produce and sell textile products based on chemicals screened for sustainability. The OEKO-TEX® Association supports the global chemical suppliers to market their products to over 10,000 OEKO-TEX® clients globally in a harmonised and third-party-verified manner.

›› Where do I get further information about ECO PASSPORT? ‹‹

For further details please visit: www.oeko-tex.com, or contact one of our partner institutes.

About OEKO-TEX®

With 25 years of experience, OEKO-TEX® leads the world in empowering and enabling consumers and companies to protect our planet by making responsible decisions. OEKO-TEX® provides standardised solutions which optimise customers' manufacturing processes and help deliver high quality, more sustainable products. All of the products within the OEKO-TEX® portfolio are used to strengthen our customers' systems, processes or products and, ultimately, they help create more sustainable companies. To date, more than 10,000 manufacturers, brands, and retailers in almost 100 countries are working with OEKO-TEX® to ensure that their products are tested for potentially harmful substances and millions of consumers around the world look for OEKO-TEX® labels before making buying decisions. OEKO-TEX® certified products and suppliers can be located in the OEKO-TEX® Online Buying Guide at www.oeko-tex.com. Connect with OEKO-TEX® on Facebook, on LinkedIn, and on Twitter.

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