



US EPA SAFER CHOICE: TIPS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Considerations for Manufacturers

What is Safer Choice?

Safer Choice is a program administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to encourage the manufacturing and use of products that contain ingredients that are safer for the environment and human health. Through a rigorous process, companies make or reformulate products using safer alternatives that meet the standards and safer chemical ingredient criteria of the Safer Choice program.

What are the benefits for companies that participate in the Safer Choice program?

Safer Choice certified products are allowed to carry the Safer Choice label which provides assurances to the consumer that the product has been thoroughly evaluated and is safe to use. This can be an asset for marketing and communicating with customers and for helping the company achieve environmental and sustainability goals. All Safer Choice products are listed on EPA's website in a searchable database accessible to the public.

What are some important factors to keep in mind?

Time: The Safer Choice certification process can be time consuming. It is not uncommon for the certification process to take at least 6 months for a product, depending on how many of the ingredients need to be fully evaluated, especially if they are not already listed on EPA's Safer Chemical Ingredients List (SCIL). The applicant must disclose all of the product's ingredients to a Safer Choice-qualified third-party profiler who compiles the data. The process can take even longer if the products are in a category that is new to the Safer Choice program.

Cost: The Safer Choice certification can be expensive. The cost to certify each product (working with one of EPA's third-party profilers) can run \$2,000 - \$5,000 on average depending on the number of ingredients that need to be evaluated. For small companies with many products this can add up to a significant amount of money and may be cost prohibitive. Keep in mind that the certification for a product only lasts for 3 years and will need to be renewed and re-certified through the same process.



What are some tips for companies considering having their products certified through the Safer Choice program?

- Think about how Safer Choice fits in with the overall goals for your company
- Identify possible new regulatory drivers
- Understand what Safer Choice products, if any, exist in your company's product categories
- Set a realistic budget; get estimates up front on costs and estimated timelines
- Consider minimizing time and costs by phasing the certification process of products over a number of years, starting with products that contain fewer ingredients

Recommended Resources

- [US EPA Safer Choice](#)
- [Resources for Safer Choice Manufacturers](#)
- [Safer Chemical Ingredients List](#)
- [Steps to Get the Safer Choice Label on Your Product](#)
- [Safer Choice Standard and Criteria](#)
- [CleanGredients Database](#)