



GREEN CHEMISTRY INDUSTRY PROFILE

An Interview with Taylor Nations, Regulatory Compliance Director, Earth Friendly Products

What should we know about Earth Friendly Products?

Earth Friendly Products, family-owned and operated since 1967, is the maker of ECOS laundry detergent and over 200 other environmentally friendly products that are safer for people, pets and the planet. Plant-based safer ingredients are used in all the products.

The company has over 300 jobs and it is continuing to grow. It is important to create as many green jobs as possible, so the company purposely use a low automation process for production that requires more people rather than machines.

How did Earth Friendly Products get started with US EPA's Safer Choice program?

Earth Friendly Products has been active in the US Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Safer Choice program since the program started in 2008. The company started a year before Safer Choice evolved from being Design for the Environment - so they grew together. In fact, EPA even sought our feedback on the new name for the program and the logo!

Why did you choose to Safer Choice for your certification program?

While there are several environmental certification programs for products, Taylor explained that they chose to put all their eggs in one basket and invest in the certification process that is backed by US EPA and which they feel people trust. They also appreciate that it is a transparent and robust certification process and includes performance testing.



What are the challenges of designing new products to meet Safer Choice Standards?

As much as possible, our formulations are developed using the same ingredients. Adding new ingredients increases the product review cost. We allow six months for the Safer Choice certification process for each product and do most of the research and development work in-house. It costs \$2,000 - \$5,000 on average per product for the certification, and the process starts over again every three years when the certification must be renewed. If the formulation has not changed, no new testing is required.

What progress have you made certifying your products?

Earth Friendly Products has over 140 Safer Choice certified products, more than any other manufacturer! To date, 73% of our product line have earned the Safer Choice label and we are continuing to certify more products.

The company has been nationally recognized for contributions to the advancement of green chemistry and the US EPA Safer Choice program, winning the US EPA Safer Choice Partner of the Year award four times! Most recently in 2020.

Do you have any advice for spreading the word about Safer Choice?

While the Safer Choice program has a great reputation, it is not as well known as some of EPA's other product certification programs such as US EPA Energy Star. More marketing and educational posts could help get the word out and educate consumers about how to use Safer Choice to select safer products to use in their homes and businesses.

What advice would you offer other manufacturers?

Taylor advised that manufacturers need to be integrating sustainable business practices and green chemistry principles whether or not they want to be Safer Choice certified.

“As more people become aware of risks and hazards from some chemical ingredients, and new rules and legislation are enacted to control their use, it may no longer be optional to be a sustainable green business.”

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