



Product Description

Disposable or limited-use, nonwoven, dry and pre-moistened wipes are used for household surface cleaning or formulation application and personal hygiene or cosmetic purposes. These include baby wipes, personal cleansing wipes, cosmetic wipes, and surface cleaning, sanitation, and formulation or treatment application wipes.

Mission

The mission of The Sustainability Consortium (TSC) is to improve the sustainability of products when they are made, purchased, and used, with a focus on manufacturers and the retail buyers who decide what products to carry in stores. The information in this document is drawn from our detailed research on known and potential social and environmental impacts across product life cycles. TSC acknowledges that other issues exist, but we have included here those that are most relevant to the decision making of retail buying teams and manufacturers. The topics are listed alphabetically for ease of reading; the order does not represent prioritization or other criteria.

Sustainability Insights



Consumers

Consumer Health and Safety

Manufacturers should formulate products to contain ingredients in accordance with applicable safety standards and should perform any necessary assessments on ingredients and formulations. Manufacturers should list ingredients in accordance with regulatory requirements and communicate proper usage and disposal instructions to consumers in a clear and accessible fashion.



Managing the Supply Chain

Pollution

Manufacturers should source wood pulp or fiber from suppliers that use alternatives to elemental chlorine bleaching processes, which can contribute to air and water pollution.

Sustainable Forestry

Unsustainable forestry practices during paper pulp sourcing can result in deforestation, decreased biodiversity, land and water degradation, and climate change impacts. To reduce the risk of deforestation impacts, manufacturers should source paper pulp from suppliers that have been verified by a credible certification program for sustainable forestry practices.



Use of Resources

Climate and Energy

Component processing and final manufacturing consume significant amounts of electricity and energy, leading to greenhouse gas emissions. Manufacturers should procure from suppliers that help abate these impacts by measuring, tracking, and reporting energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, with a focus on reduction.

They should also perform preventative maintenance on equipment, replace inefficient equipment, and encourage efficient energy behaviors throughout their operations.

Disposal and End-of-Life

Unmanaged landfills or landfills without methane capture systems release greenhouse gas emissions, leading to climate change. In addition, littered products can impact land and waterways. Manufacturers should design wipes products to minimize material use while maintaining uncompromised performance. Manufacturers should account for end-of-life options, to prevent issues from litter and landfilling of disposed products.

Packaging

Packaging design should be optimized to ensure that packaging performs its essential functions of containment and protection while minimizing use of materials, energy resources, and environmental impacts across the life cycle of the packaged product. Under-packaging and over-packaging can both lead to increased impacts. These impacts may be mitigated by using more energy-efficient manufacturing, creating packaging materials from renewable resources, designing packaging to be recyclable, and encouraging consumer recycling.

Water

Component processing can use a significant amount of water, which can contribute to freshwater depletion and may be problematic in water-stressed regions. Manufacturers should procure components from suppliers who measure water use, and perform water use assessments throughout their supply chains, in order to map water risk in different geographical regions and mitigate impacts associated with freshwater depletion. Manufacturers should assure that water pollution is avoided throughout their supply chains, including where local government monitoring is lax.