



The Ashkin Group

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EPA Announces “Internal Pilot” for Green Disinfectant Claims

***“Positive Step” Says ISSA’s Bill Balek
Prudent and Necessary Step, Says Stephen Ashkin***

Bloomington, Indiana- Feb 10, 2009 – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announces they will conduct an “internal pilot” in conjunction with the agency’s Design for the Environment Formulator Program (DfE) to further explore a policy change that allows claims of environmental preferability in regard to nonporous hard-surface disinfectants and sanitizers.

The agency’s plans were the result of a February 3, 2009 meeting of the Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee (PPDC) Work Group on Comparative Claims in Washington, D.C.

“EPA’s announcement of the internal pilot is a positive step forward in developing an agency policy that meshes with the demands of today’s green marketplace,” said Bill Balek, Director of Legislative Affairs, ISSA.

The purpose of the internal pilot program is to increase the understanding between EPA's DfE scientists and the pesticide registration review staff as to what a review for environmental preferability entails and how that might interface with the pesticide registration process. (Note: By law, disinfectants are regulated as "pesticides.")

"The internal pilot announced by EPA is a prudent and necessary step in developing a 'green' claims policy that ensures the continued efficacy [performance] of disinfectants and that allows purchasers to make informed decisions when selecting products with a preferred environmental, safety, and health profile," said Stephen Ashkin, President, The Ashkin Group.

Both Balek and Ashkin participated at the recent meeting and in the summer of 2008 were appointed to the work group established for the purpose of making a policy recommendation in regard to allowing claims of environmental preferability for pesticide products including disinfectants. Current EPA policy prohibits such claims.

Under the internal pilot, both DfE and Office of Pesticide Program (OPP) staff will conduct concurrent evaluations of products previously recognized under the DfE program that mimic antimicrobial pesticide formulations.

Upon completion of the evaluation, DfE and OPP scientists will discuss the results and consider modifications to the criteria and/or process of the review for environmental attributes. If, at that time, EPA sees benefit in continuation of a pilot program, the agency anticipates launching an "external pilot" that would presumably involve the participation of industry.

EPA also decided to evaluate a parallel approach by which "factual claims" could be made about a product's 'green' attributes and established a work group that both Balek and Ashkin will serve on to develop options for further consideration.

Steve Ashkin is available for interviews, presentations, and commentary on Green Cleaning-related issues, sustainable buildings, industry trends, and facility management. He may be reached by calling (812) 332-7950.

About Stephen Ashkin and The Ashkin Group

Stephen P. Ashkin is president of The Ashkin Group, a consulting firm specializing in Greening the Cleaning process and Executive Director of the Green Cleaning Network, both based in Bloomington, IN.

The Ashkin Group provides Green consulting services for school districts as well as building owners, product manufacturers, and cleaning contractors. For more information on The Ashkin Group, visit <http://www.ashkingroup.com>, call (812) 332-7950, or e-mail: steveashkin@ashkingroup.com.