

Glossary of Green Terminology

The following glossary defines words, phrases and acronyms commonly encountered in reference to green products and environmental discussions.

Aerobic — pertaining to or caused by the presence of oxygen.

Anaerobic — pertaining to or caused by the absence of oxygen.

APVC — anaerobic **PVC** film disintegrates completely in a few as 5 years without leaving behind any toxic residue when composted in a landfill.

Bio based product — defined by the United States Secretary of Agriculture in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 as a commercial or industrial product (other than food or feed) that is composed, in whole or in significant part, of biological products or renewable domestic agricultural materials (including plant, animal and marine materials), or forestry materials, or an intermediate feedstock.

Bio-D® — a registered trademark for KLEERTECH patented biodegradable products.

Bio-plastic — a form of plastic derived from renewable biomass sources, such as vegetable fats and oils, corn starch, pea starch or micro biota, rather than fossil fuel plastics which are derived from petroleum. Some, but not all, bio-plastics are designed to biodegrade .

Bio-polymer — polymers that are biodegradable; the input materials for the production of these polymers may be either renewable (based on agricultural plant or animal products or synthetic). Bio-polymers are based on starch, sugar, cellulose and synthetic materials.

Biodegradable — product will break down and return to nature within a reasonably short time after customary disposal.

CFA — cellulose fiber acetate (also called wood cellulose acetate) is a synthetic fiber produced from wood pulp, a byproduct of the logging industry.

Carbon footprint — the amount of carbon dioxide or other carbon compounds emitted into the atmosphere by the activities of an individual, company, country, etc.

Carbon neutral — having achieved a state in which the net amount of carbon dioxide or other carbon compounds emitted into the atmosphere is zero because it is balanced by actions to reduce or offset these emissions.

Carbon offsetting — a program in which a company, country, etc., reduces or offsets its carbon emissions through the funding of activities and projects that improve the environment.

Carbon sink or carbon well — areas of vegetation, especially forests, and the phytoplankton rich seas that absorb the carbon dioxide produced by the burning of fossil fuels.

Compostable — all the materials in the product or package will break down into, or otherwise become part of, usable compost (e.g. soil conditioning material, mulch) in a safe and timely manner in an appropriate composting program or facility, or in a home compost pile or device.

Conservation — the careful utilization of a natural resource in order to prevent depletion.

Cradle-to-cradle — the design and engineering of materials and machines based on the study of the structure and function of biological systems.

Cradle-to-grave — spanning an entire lifetime, from birth to death.

Degradable — product degrades in approximately the same amount of time that it takes for sewage to be processed in a typical waste water system.

Diversion rate — the rate or percentage of waste materials diverted from traditional disposal such as landfills or incineration to be recycled, composted or reused.

ECF (Elemental Chlorine Free) — see [PCF](#).

Environmentally friendly — (also eco-friendly, nature friendly and green) are terms used to refer to goods and services, laws, guidelines and policies claimed to inflict minimal or no harm to the environment.

Environmentally preferable — the product has a reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products that serve the same purpose.

Greenwash — used to describe the act of misleading consumers regarding the environmental practices of a company or the environmental benefits of a product or service.

HIPS — A post-consumer recycled impact modified polystyrene for general use.

Life cycle — the useful life of a product or system.

Mobius loop (aka chasing arrows) — developed by the Society of the Plastics Industry, this symbol is used in combination with an SPI code number between 1 and 7.3 to indicate the type of plastic from which the product is made.

Non-Woven — made of fibers autogenously (self-produced, self-generated, without the addition of) bonded through the action of a chemical agent or heating device, or adhering by means of resinous substances.

Organic — relating to the compounds of carbon; relating to natural products.

PCF (Processed chlorine free) — paper in which no chlorine derivatives were used in the recycling process, although papers which were originally bleached with chlorine or chlorine derivatives may have been used as feedstock.

PET/PETE — polyethylene terephthalate; a thermoplastic (reacts to heat and cold) resin of the polyester family used to make beverage, food and other liquid containers, and synthetic fibers; however, it does not contain polyethylene.

PVC — polyvinyl chloride; a synthetic thermoplastic (reacts to heat and cold) material made by polymerizing (combining molecules) vinyl chloride (a manufactured gas). The properties depend on the added plasticizer (substances used to impart viscosity, flexibility, softness or other properties to the product).

POM — polyoxymethylene is a synthetic polymer and engineering thermoplastic used in precision parts requiring high stiffness, low friction and excellent dimensional stability.

Pre-consumer waste — materials that have been recovered or diverted from the solid waste stream during manufacturing; applies only to manufacturing waste products that would normally be disposed of and not reused.

Post-consumer waste — waste produced by the end consumer of a material stream; that is, where the waste producing use did not involve the production of another product.

Recovered — waste material and by-products which have been recovered or diverted from the waste stream, but does not include those materials and by-products generated from, and commonly used within, an original manufacturing process.

Recyclable — the product can be collected from the trash and used again, or reused in the manufacture of another package or product through an established recycling program. A 'recyclable' claim must clearly state whether it applies to a product's packaging, the product itself, or both.

Reclaimed — to recover in a pure or usable form from refuse, discarded articles, etc.

Recycled content — materials that have been recovered or otherwise diverted from the solid waste stream, either during the manufacturing process (pre-consumer), or after consumer use (post-consumer).

Renewable — the ability to be replaced through biological or other natural processes and replenished with the passage of time.

Repurposed — to reuse for a different purpose, on a long term basis, without alteration, or to alter to make more suited for a different purpose.

Sustainable — pertaining to a system that maintains its own viability by using techniques that allow for continual reuse.

Virgin — occurring naturally in a pure and uncombined form; previously unused.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) — gases emitted from liquids or solid substances which may cause short and long term harmful health effects.