

CASE FOUND TWO COMPANIES MISUSING THE GREEN LABEL ISSUED BY SEC

The Consumers Association of Singapore (CASE) and the Singapore Environment Council (SEC) conducted a joint survey on Green Labelling of washing detergents from mid February to early March 2009. CASE found that 2 out of the 38 brands or 5% of washing detergents surveyed have misrepresented in their product labelling that they have been awarded the SEC's Green Label. The 2 brands are Power Plus Anti-Bacterial from CMM Marketing and SPANK Floor Cleaning solution from Lifestyle Integral, a clothes cleaning detergent and a floor cleaning detergent respectively.

The Green Label is a voluntary certification awarded to manufacturers who can prove that their product is significantly less harmful to the environment than other similar products. With the Singapore Green Labelling Scheme (SGLS) in place, it helps consumers to identify products that are eco-friendly. CASE is concerned that manufacturers, in their desire to boost sales, misrepresented that their product has been awarded SEC's Green Label.

The main objectives of this survey are:

1. To find out if there are manufacturers misusing the Green Label by displaying the Green Label on products which actually did not get SEC's Approval
2. To find out whether the Green Label certification is correctly printed on products that have been awarded the Singapore Green Label

Figure 1 below shows how a typical Green Label should look like.

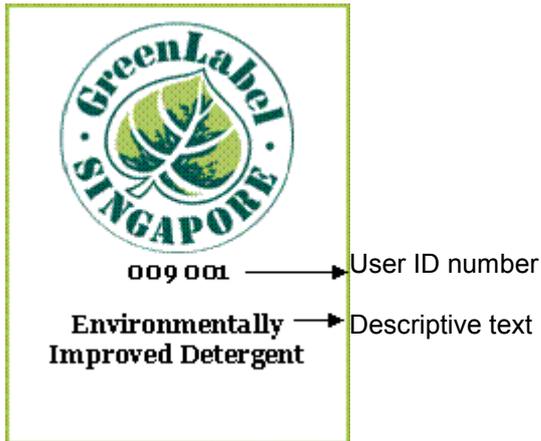


Figure 1: Singapore Green Label

From the survey, CASE and SEC also found that 8 brands out of 38 brands surveyed or 21.05% have incorrect User ID number and/or descriptive text on their Green Label.

With regard to the misrepresentation involved, CASE has written to the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) to request them to look into the issue. The misrepresentation is a breach of the Consumer Protection (Trade Descriptions and Safety Requirements) Act. On the other hand, SEC has ordered CMM Marketing to remove all PowerPlus products with the green label by 15 June 2009. As for Lifestyle Integral, SEC has been unable to reach them. SEC thus urges consumers to be cautious of products manufactured under this brand such as SPANK floor cleaner if they are specifically buying the products for eco-friendly reasons.

CASE would like to emphasise that using the Green Label on a product that is not endorsed with the SGLS is a misrepresentation to consumers. Manufacturers who are not in the scheme should go through the right channel to receive the endorsement and not illegally misrepresent to consumers that their products have been awarded the Green Label. However, we are heartened to know that most brands of washing detergents, 95% of those surveyed in the market are endorsed by

the SGLS. We would strongly encourage all manufacturers to participate in this scheme and do a part to improve our environment.

Consumers who wish to find out more about the Green Label and a full list of certified products to verify whether the product they purchased is endorsed under the SGLS can visit SEC's Singapore Green Labeling Scheme (SGLS) Homepage at www.sec.org.sg/greenlabel.

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