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CONTACT: Shayna Samuels, 718-541-4785, shayna@ripplestrategies.com

New Global Standard for Decreasing Toxic Chemicals in Electronics Released Today

GreenScreen® for Safer Chemicals Announced as Method to Meet Requirements

(Somerville, MA) – [TCO Certified](#) -- an international third party sustainability certification for IT products – announced today a new approach to phase out hazardous substances in computers, displays and other electronic devices. This approach, which focuses on halogenated flame retardants and the toxic chemicals used to replace them, recommends the use of [GreenScreen® for Safer Chemicals](#), a method for comparative chemical hazard assessment developed by the non-profit organization [Clean Production Action](#). “Integrating GreenScreen into the new standard exemplifies how manufacturers can reduce the chemical footprint of their products by using GreenScreen and getting TCO Certified,” highlighted Dr. Mark S. Rossi, Interim Executive Director of Clean Production Action.

GreenScreen fits the needs of electronics industry because the method “provides a structured approach to evaluating a comprehensive set of human and environmental health and safety data,” says the TCO Development press release. “By using GreenScreen, industry will more easily be able to identify substances that have been tested, evaluated and that can more safely replace those that have been proven most hazardous to the environment and human health.”

Electronics are associated with many different sustainability risks throughout their life cycle, including mineral extraction, manufacturing, use and end of life phases. Some of these risks include: negative environmental effects from the extraction of raw materials and manufacturing processes, working conditions, energy consumption, hazardous chemical content, and low recycling rates, which feeds a growing global e-waste problem. TCO Certified contains criteria aimed at addressing many of these challenges in each life cycle phase.

Halogenated flame retardants, which pose hazards to human health and the environment across their life cycle, have been largely phased out of IT products. While the effort to eliminate all halogenated content in electronics continues, the new TCO Certified also takes a closer look at the non-halogenated flame retardants.

TCO Development recommends GreenScreen, which builds on the [US EPA DfE](#) approach as well as legislation such as [EU REACH](#), in part because the methodology is freely and publicly accessible, transparent, peer reviewed and is based on a structured decision logic that distills complex hazard evaluations down to an easily understood hazard table. It then assigns the chemical one of four possible benchmarks, depending on the level of concern.

The new guidelines propose that TCO Certified products can only contain substances that are assigned a GreenScreen Benchmark-2 or higher and that are on the TCO Certified Accepted Substances List. The assessment of the substance must be made by a licensed profiler approved by Clean Production Action and sent to TCO Development for inclusion on the TCO Certified Accepted Substance List.

By choosing TCO Certified computers, displays and other devices, businesses and organizations around the world are able to help meet environmental and social challenges associated with electronics.

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