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Do you have any questions about the service description? We will be happy to help you.

You can reach us by e-mail at info.tncert@tuev-nord.de or in person from Monday to Friday between 07:30 and 18:00 on 0800 - 2457457.

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The Blue Angel eco-label was founded in 1978 and is a label owned by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV). The purpose of the ecolabel is to provide consumers, the public sector and industry with reliable product information to enable them to promote ecological product innovations through targeted demand for environmentally friendly products and thus reduce environmental pollution. The Ecolabel promotes environmental and health concerns as well as consumer protection. It is awarded to products and services that are particularly environmentally friendly from a holistic perspective and at the same time fulfil high standards in terms of occupational health and safety and suitability for use. The Blue Angel eco-label is an impartial quality mark for environmentally friendly products. The criteria are developed on a scientific basis and periodically updated in the light of new findings. The Blue Angel eco-label is awarded by an independent, impartial and voluntary body, the "Environmental Label Jury". RAL gGmbH is responsible for processing applications and checking the evidence to be submitted.

1. VERIFICATION PROCEDURE

1.1. Preparation

The Environmental Label Jury has identified more than 200 product groups and services on behalf of the label holder (BMUV) for which criteria for labelling with the Blue Angel have been developed. Behind each product group that is eligible for a Blue Angel, there are award criteria with corresponding specific requirements and required evidence. The prerequisite is that award criteria exist for the product or service you offer. You can find all the Basic Award Criteria at <http://www.blauer-engel.de>.

If your product can be assigned to one of the Blue Angel Basic Award Criteria, you must obtain or issue the evidence specified in Chapter 3 of the respective Basic Award Criteria. For some of the products, the criteria require external verification. Depending on the product group, authorised auditors are, for example, the FSC/PEFC auditors of TÜV NORD CERT GmbH, as well as our accredited environmental verifiers and environmental auditors.

For the following award criteria ("UZ" = environmental label), we offer external verification to fulfil the required verification evidence obligation:

- DE-UZ 5 (Sanitary Paper)
- DE-UZ 14a (Graphic Paper and Cardboard made from 100% recycled Paper)
- DE-UZ 35 (Wallpaper and Woodchip Wall Coverings mainly made from recycled Paper)
- DE-UZ 65 (Cooking and heat-resistant Filter Papers and Baking Papers)
- DE-UZ 72 (Printing and Publication Paper mainly from recovered paper)
- DE-UZ 217a (Paper made from 100% recovered Paper for Paper Bags and Boxes)
- DE-UZ 223 (Thermal Papers).

1.2. On-site verification procedure

Depending on the award criteria, the external independent auditor or environmental verifier from TÜV NORD CERT GmbH carries out on-site inspections of the waste paper used or the primary fibre wood procurement and, if necessary, other parameters.

During the preparatory phase, the date and detailed planning of the audit are agreed with the customer. If necessary, documents can be checked in advance for completeness and accuracy. A pre-audit is generally not necessary. The award criteria generally require an on-site assessment, e.g. sorting at the waste paper yard, introduction into the stock preparation process or an insight into the measurement process/measurement technology for wastewater contamination.

If necessary, the inspector analyses any evidence previously sent to him and collects the necessary information, observations and documents on site (e.g. proof of purchase and delivery, production orders, recipes, etc.).

After the on-site inspection and approval of the process by a TÜV NORD expert (4-eyes principle), you will receive an inspection report, an inspection certificate (as an additional service on request) and the annex signed by the inspector for submission to RAL gGmbH. This is proof that the requirements of the Blue Angel have been tested on your premises and are being complied with.

The test certificate is valid for the calendar year and must be repeated annually. As a rule, contracts for testing services are concluded for 5 years, although shorter periods are also possible. The inspection certificate contains a registration number that can be used to check the legitimacy of the certificate at the e-mail address tncert-q-kontrolle@tuev-nord.de. This effectively prevents forgery.

- DE-UZ 5 Sanitary Paper
 - Verification that only waste paper is used, and only grades that are approved according to the list of grades in the award criteria for the Ecolabel, in accordance with DIN EN 643:2014
 - Review of last year's purchasing and consumption lists: Review of the manufacturer's information (average proportion of waste paper types used, as a quantity balance);
 - On-site inspection of the grades used (waste paper warehouse/ yard), comparison with the grades approved for the ecolabel in accordance with the list of grades in the award criteria;
 - Inspection of stock preparation in the company and the types of waste paper currently used there, in accordance with the DIN EN 643:2014 list of grades;
 - Verification of compliance with limit values for AOX and wastewater volume flow in accordance with award criteria.

- DE-UZ 14a Graphic papers and cardboard made from 100% reclaimed paper
 - Verification that only waste paper is used, and only grades that are approved according to the list of grades in the award criteria for the Ecolabel, in accordance with DIN EN 643:2014
 - Review of last year's purchasing and consumption lists: Review of the manufacturer's information (average proportion of waste paper types used, as a quantity balance);
 - On-site inspection of the grades used (waste paper warehouse/ yard), comparison with the grades approved for the ecolabel in accordance with the list of grades in the award criteria;

- Inspection of stock preparation in the company and the types of waste paper currently used there, in accordance with the DIN EN 643:2014 list of grades;

- DE-UZ 35 Wallpaper and Woodchip Wall Coverings mainly made from recycled Paper
 - Verification that the minimum quantities of recovered paper are used for paper wallpapers and woodchip fibres in those grades that are approved in accordance with the list of grades in the Basic Award Criteria for the Ecolabel;
 - Checking the purchasing and consumption lists from the previous year: Checking the manufacturer's information (average proportion of waste paper types used in the total raw material input for the certified paper quality as a quantity balance);
 - On-site inspection of the varieties used (waste paper warehouse), comparison with the varieties approved for the ecolabel in accordance with the list of varieties in the Basic Award Criteria;
 - Verification of compliance with the quantity specifications and quantity flows, inspection of the stock preparation in the company and the grades of recovered paper currently used there for compliance with the grade list of the award basis.
 - Verification of the origin of the primary fibres used on the basis of the delivery documents (verification of the minimum proportion of certified primary fibres from certified forestry and verification of the countries of origin).

- DE-UZ 65 Cooking and heat-resistant Filter Papers and Baking Papers
 - Verification of compliance with the maximum permissible values COD, BSB5, N, P, AOX as well as filterable substances and wastewater volume flow in accordance with the award criteria.

- DE-UZ 72 Printing and Publication Paper mainly from recovered paper
 - Verification that only those types of waste paper are used that are authorised in accordance with the list of types in the Basic Award Criteria for the Ecolabel (in accordance with DIN EN 643:2014);
 - Review of last year's purchasing and consumption lists: Review of the manufacturer's information on the average proportion of waste paper types used in the total raw material input for the certified paper quality (as a quantity balance);
 - Verification of compliance with the quantity specifications and quantity flows, inspection of the stock preparation in the company and the grades of recovered paper currently used there for compliance with the grade list of the award criteria;
 - Verification of the applicant's information on primary fibre procurement via the manufacturers of the primary fibres, including the origin of the wood used, certification of the wood fibre (supplier's certificate and delivery documents with certification statement).

- DE-UZ 217a Paper made from 100% recovered Paper for Paper Bags and Boxes

- Verification that only recovered paper is used, and only grades that are authorised according to the list of grades in the award criteria for the Ecolabel, in accordance with DIN EN 643:2014;
 - Review of last year's purchasing and consumption lists: Review of the manufacturer's information (average proportion of waste paper types used, as a quantity balance);
 - On-site inspection of the grades used (waste paper warehouse), comparison with the grades approved for the ecolabel in accordance with the list of grades in the award criteria;
 - Inspection of stock preparation in the company and the types of waste paper currently used there, in accordance with the DIN EN 643:2014 list of grades;
 - Verification of compliance with limit values for AOX and wastewater volume flow in accordance with award criteria.
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- DE-UZ 223 Thermal Papers / Initial Verification
 - Review of wastewater emissions based on information from all pulp suppliers/manufacturers
 - Review of exhaust air emissions based on information from all pulp suppliers/manufacturers
 - Review of bleaching processes based on information from all pulp suppliers/manufacturers
 - Review of energy consumption based on information from all pulp suppliers/manufacturers
 - Verification of wastewater parameters in paper production (directly at the applicant's premises)
 - The applicant (paper manufacturer) shall provide the TÜV NORD inspector with the data of the pulp suppliers/manufacturers in a suitable form.
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- DE-UZ 223 Thermal Papers / recurring surveillance verification
 - Only verification of wastewater parameters in paper production (directly at the applicant's premises).

1.3. Test certificate/ test result/ test mark

After the on-site inspection, the inspector certifies conformity with the Basic Award Criteria on the corresponding application documents, provided that all the information to be confirmed by the external inspection is correct (RAL gGmbH provides the corresponding application documents as an annex to the Basic Award Criteria on the Blue Angel website).

After approval by a TÜV NORD expert (4-eyes principle), the applicant also receives a verification report detailing the verification procedure and listing the evidence/samples. On request, TN CERT GmbH will also issue a verification statement if the verification is successful.

If complete fulfilment of the award criteria is not evident in the verification, the inspector may make restrictive comments on the application documents.

If you do not agree with the result of the assessment, you can lodge an objection with TÜV NORD CERT GmbH. TÜV NORD CERT GmbH's response to your objection may not be satisfactory. In this case, TÜV NORD CERT GmbH will forward your objection to RAL gGmbH.

The application itself is always submitted by the applicant directly to RAL gGmbH. The applicant is responsible for the completeness of all evidence and other documents submitted. When submitting the application, all supporting documents should not be older than one year.

RAL gGmbH is exclusively responsible for the award and use of the label. The Blue Angel eco-label can be used on products and services as determined by RAL gGmbH.

The ecolabel is administered exclusively via the label usage agreement with RAL gGmbH and made available by RAL gGmbH. Further details are governed by the Schedule of Fees and the Label Usage Agreements. The complete award criteria are published in German and English and made available on the Blue Angel website on the Internet.

2. RECURRING SURVEILLANCE

In the follow-up inspections (recurring surveillance), the same basic award criteria are checked as in the initial inspection (exception: DE-UZ 223). RAL gGmbH generally requires annual repeat inspections or annual updating of all evidence/ documentation.

3. VALIDITY OF THE VERIFICATION

RAL gGmbH determines the validity of the award criteria individually. In the event of a change to the award criteria, RAL gGmbH will announce this on the Blue Angel website and indicate the expiry date of all existing label usage contracts. Applications must then be resubmitted under the amended award criteria by a deadline, i.e. a new/extended external audit may be required in such cases.

4. EXTENSION OF THE SCOPE

If you wish to have a product group or its award criteria additionally verified in the follow-up verifications, please inform us in good time in advance, as the extension involves additional work. The same applies if you wish to have additional production sites/locations verified.

5. VERIFICATION OF COMPANIES WITH MULTIPLE LOCATIONS

For all currently relevant award criteria, the evidence to be submitted to RAL gGmbH is specifically related to a specific production facility/location. This means that you must submit a separate application to RAL gGmbH for each of several production sites/locations for the product in question in order to use the label. Accordingly, the TN CERT inspector must also inspect each production site/location and issue a separate confirmation/inspection report. Of course, synergy effects can be utilised by combining several sites in one inspection order.

In particular, the combination with FSC and/or PEFC audits has proven to be very favourable for the efficient implementation of Blue Angel verification.

6. MANAGEMENT OF NON-CONFORMITIES

In the event of any necessary improvements due to deviations from the award criteria, the inspector decides to what extent the subsequent submission of documents is sufficient to confirm fulfilment of the award criteria or whether further on-site appointments are required. Any additional time or effort required will be invoiced as an additional expense at the current daily rate.