TÜVNORD

Service Description
GRÜNER KNOPF 2.0

CONTENT

If you should require any further information then please do not hesitate to contact us. We will be please to help you.

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The “Green Button” is a state-approved label for textiles that are put on the market by organisations with a responsible approach to social and ecological sustainability.
The Green Button combines requirements for the product itself with requirements for the organisation, as the textiles have to fulfil certain social and environmental standards. In addition, the organisation has to fulfil duty of care obligations with regard to human rights and the environment within the supply chain. The criteria are based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP) and also sector-specific recommendations of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains in the Garment and Footwear Sector).
Certification according to the Green Button criteria is based on the requirements from the current version of the standard and the certification programme. These are decisive for the certification process, which is summarised below.
Before the certification process at TÜV NORD CERT GmbH can be started, the client has to apply for the Green Button from the label awarding body, RAL (Deutsches Institut für Gütesicherung und Kennzeichnung). Following a successful assessment by RAL, the client has to present a completed application form and confirmation of entitlement to make the application to TÜV NORD CERT GmbH. When the contract with TÜV NORD CERT GmbH has been signed, the certification process can begin.

1. CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

1.1. Audit Preparation

The auditor, in a preliminary discussion with the customer, assesses the current status of the company's preparation for the audit. In order to conduct the on-site audit efficiently, the customer must send existing documents to the auditor no later than four weeks before the audit. The self-assessment and product list should also be uploaded to the tender portal no later than four weeks before the audit date. These will be accessible to the auditor. Other documents such as the policy statement, risk analysis, process descriptions, etc. must be transmitted via email. Based on the information provided in advance, the auditor creates the audit plan, which will be sent to the customer for preparation no later than 2 weeks before the audit. Additionally, it will be uploaded to the Green Button portal.

1.2. Initial Audit

The audit takes place on site at the client’s premises. The main part of the assessment concerns the criteria relating to the organisation. Following this, the product criteria are assessed. The basis of the assessment is the current version of the Green Button standard. In addition to a detailed document review, interviews are performed with employees and members of the management. A summary of the results is presented to the client following the audit. The audit results are documented in an audit report and uploaded to the Green Button portal. All "sufficiently fulfilled" and "not fulfilled" indicators are summarized in a deviation report and provided to the customer. If deviations from the standard are established, the client has a maximum of 2 weeks in order to create a root cause analysis and an action plan. These are reviewed by the audit team. If the analysis and the plan are accepted, the final audit report is drawn up.

1.3. Issue of the certificate

If the initial audit is successful, TÜV NORD CERT GmbH issues a certificate. This shows the main textile groups that are certified and is valid for 3 years. The certificate, the audit report and the product list are sent to the awarding body RAL via the RAL portal.
The client concludes a licence agreement with RAL based on the successful certification. The Green Button label can then be affixed to the certified products.

2. SURVEILLANCE AUDIT

The 1st surveillance audit takes place 12 months from the date of certificate issuance. The relevant audit documents should be submitted to TÜV NORD 4 weeks prior to the audit. Surveillance audits can be carried out on site or remotely. This decision mostly depends on the complexity of the client's business. Surveillance audits have a more limited scope then the initial or recertification audit. Generally, only selected core elements are assessed.

3. RECERTIFICATION AUDIT

Recertification has to take place before expiry of the 3-year period of validity, and this audit also takes place on site in the organisation to be certified. The assessment is carried out in order to establish that the criteria related to the organisation and the product criteria continue to be met. If the assessment is successful, the validity of the certificate is prolonged.

4. ADDITIONAL PRODUCTS

If additional products are to be added to the product list during the certification cycle, the client has to update the existing product list to include these and to upload it to the RAL portal. There are two options:

1. If the products come from an already certified supply chain, verification by TÜV NORD is not necessary. Evidences and documentation for the products are reviewed in the following audit.
2. However, if the products come from a new supply chain, evidences have to sent to TÜV NORD and verified. The product list must then be sent to the RAL via the portal.

5. SPECIAL AUDIT

A special audit takes place:

- If nonconformities are established, and submission of documents is not considered sufficient to establish rectification, a special audit can take place after a set period to assess fulfilment of the criteria related to the organisation.
- If production has been has been suspended for more than 12 months
- If a third-party label is suspended or withdrawn and the affected product is the only one from the client that carries the "Green Button" label.
- If justifiably required by the certification body, the awarding body (RAL), the German international cooperation agency (GIZ) or the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

6. ENDING, LIMITATION, SUSPENSION OR WITHDRAWAL OF THE CERTIFICATION

A certificate is suspended,

- if deviations from the set requirements are not corrected within the set time limit or are not corrected effectively;
- if the evidence for the recognised third-party seal is suspended or withdrawn and that was the single product of the client with the Green Button;

The certificate is withdrawn if major nonconformities are not corrected within the set time, or the effectiveness of the actions that are introduced cannot be confirmed, or if new major nonconformities are identified.

A certificate also loses its validity if

- audits are not performed before the deadline or are not performed in their entirety,
- requirements are not fulfilled,
- certification fees are not paid in good time,
- the prerequisites for issue of the certificate are no longer present,
- significant changes are made to the certified product.

7. CHANGE OF CERTIFICATION BODY

In the event of a change:

- The validity date of the current certificate must also be maintained under the new certification body
- All outstanding surveillance audits of the current certification cycle must be conducted as described in the certification program
- On the day of the change, the new certification body must inform the business office and the awarding body about the takeover

When is a change possible:

- During an ongoing evaluation (begins as soon as the certification body has started reviewing relevant documents for the actual evaluation)
- For suspended certification (customer must remain with their current certification body until deviations are closed)
- For outstanding deviations

The following documents are required fir the duration of the current certification cycle:

- Copies of previous reports, including reports from initial evaluations, surveillance, special evaluations, and recertification evaluations, as available
- All evidence submitted by the customer to the certification body, if the customer agrees to provide them

8. MANAGEMENT OF NON-CONFORMITIES

Nonconformities are described in the audit report. The deadlines that are to be met are defined in the certification criteria or by the auditor.