

earthborn®

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Ecolabel Product Group: Paints and Varnishes



“As our products carry the EU Ecolabel it means they meet the criteria of RICS SKA rating. Organisations seeking to certify an office or retail fit-out for sustainability best practice increasingly use the SKA rating system operated by RICS,” said Cathryn Helsby, Marketing Manager, Earthborn Paints.

Why did Earthborn apply for the EU Ecolabel?

“An increasing number of trade paint customers, such as architects, builders, etc, are asking for products with recognised environmental certification,” said Cathryn Helsby, Marketing Manager, Earthborn paints.



So what is driving these enquiries?

Sustainability is playing an increasingly important role in the construction industry with research indicating higher asset values for certified low carbon buildings. In the UK there are two environmental assessment methods in particular that can help demonstrate your sustainability credentials. RICS (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) has the SKA rating, specifically for individual building fit-out projects. There

is also the BREEAM environmental assessment method and rating system for whole buildings, which addresses wide-ranging environmental and sustainability issues, and enables developers, designers and building managers to demonstrate the environmental credentials of their buildings to clients.



“The EU Ecolabel certification process for Paints & Varnishes provides independent, third party assurance that each product meets the highest possible environmental performance, therefore contributing significantly to a positive SKA or BREEAM rating. To help organisations streamline their product selection process and reduce research time, RICS is expanding its SKA rating product compliance scheme. Individual

products are assessed against SKA Rating criteria and, if approved, are certified to carry the SKA product compliance label. We recently put forward one of our products as a test for this new scheme and our Ecopro Matt Emulsion passed,” said Cathryn Helsby.

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The Application Process

“As with all certification schemes, the application process can appear daunting at first. Fortunately, there is help at hand and we would always recommend contacting UK Ecolabel Delivery for guidance to get you started. However, our license holders have discovered that, once you have become familiar with the application process, it becomes so much easier to add further products and licenses.” Cathryn Helsby of Earthborn Paints continues: “We found the application process very technical. However, once we were put in direct contact with the UK Ecolabel Delivery Team’s technical assessors, we found them very helpful.”

EU Ecolabel Products

The criteria for Indoor and Outdoor Paints and Varnishes promotes products that have a reduced environmental impact by: maximising performance, while minimising waste; banning hazardous substances and other environmental risks (such as tropospheric ozone and VOCs); and, providing information to consumers to optimise efficient use and disposal of the product.



Results

“The EU Ecolabel has enabled us to back up our eco credentials in a highly competitive market place. It gives end users reassurance that the claims we make are supported by an independent accreditation,” explains Cathryn Helsby. “One of our most notable achievements was the winning of the contract for Lush Cosmetics brand’s shop fit outs. As our products carry the EU Ecolabel, it meant that using them to decorate their shops could help them achieve gold SKA ratings for shop fit outs.”

Cathryn Helsby concludes: *“We are proud of the fact that we were the first UK licence holder for Indoor Paints and Varnishes back in 2005. We [still] believe that having the EU Ecolabel helps improve our position and gain awareness in the highly competitive market place. Consumers choose our paint over other ‘eco’ brands because we have the accreditation to back us up.”*