



# SCS Verification Standard for Recycling Operations

SCS-106



Version 5.0 – January 2026



# SCS standards and assurance systems

**SCS Standards and Assurance Systems** serves as a catalyst to advance the private and public sectors in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet.

This document is the property of SCS Standards and all inquiries regarding its use should be directed to:

SCS Standards and Assurance Systems  
2000 Powell Street, Ste. 600  
Emeryville, CA 94608 USA  
510-452-8000 | 510-452-8001 fax  
Email: [standards@scsstandards.org](mailto:standards@scsstandards.org)

Additional information can also be found at SCS Standards: [www.scsstandards.org](http://www.scsstandards.org)

## Disclaimer

---

SCS Standards does not make any warranty (express or implied) or assume any liability or responsibility to the user, reader, or other third party, for the use of, or reliance on, any information contained within this program, or for any injuries, losses, or damages (including without limitation, equitable relief) arising out of such use or reliance. SCS Standards authorizes the user to view, use, and reference this program. The user agrees that all copyright and other proprietary notices contained in this program remain the exclusive property of SCS Standards. The user also agrees not to sell or modify this standard in any way for any public or commercial purpose. As an additional condition of use, the user covenants not to sue, and agrees to waive and release SCS Standards and its employees from any and all claims, demands, and causes of action for any injuries, losses, or damages (including without limitation, equitable relief) that may now or hereafter have a right to assert against such parties as a result of use of, or reliance on, this standard.

## Table of Contents

---

1.	Introduction .....	1
1.1	Purpose.....	1
1.2	Intended Users .....	1
1.3	Language.....	1
2.	Scope and Limitation .....	1
2.1	Scope .....	1
2.2	Limitations .....	2
3.	Conformance.....	2
3.1	Conformance to the Standard .....	2
3.2	Complaints and Appeals .....	2
4.	References .....	3
4.1	References .....	3
5.	Terms and Definitions .....	3
6.	Requirements.....	6
6.1	General .....	6
6.2	Inputs.....	7
6.3	Outputs.....	7
7.	Claims and Labeling .....	8
7.1	General Conformance Requirements.....	8
7.2	Acceptable Claims.....	8

## Record of Revisions

---

This Standard is periodically updated. It is the responsibility of the document reader to ensure the use of the most current version of the document.

**Table 1.** List of changes made in the current version 5.0 of SCS-106, since the previous version.

Version:	Release date:	Changes:
V5.0	September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Moved to a new style format.</li><li>▪ Changed claims to relate to the quantity of input, the quantity of output, and the conversion rate.</li><li>▪ Added acceptable claims.</li><li>▪ Updated the terms and definitions and references.</li><li>▪ Added requirements 6.1.1, 6.1.8, and 6.1.9.</li></ul>

## 1. Introduction

---

### 1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 The purpose of the SCS-106 Verification Standard for Recycling Operations (hereafter, SCS-106) is to substantiate the claims asserted by companies conducting recycling operations, regarding the materials they recycle and their recycling rates. The Standard allows a company to demonstrate that:

- a) It is not a waste storage facility.
- b) It is diverting waste from landfill, incineration, or permanent storage by processing waste (recovered material) into usable material (recycled material).
- c) The output of the recycling operation is either pre-consumer or post-consumer recycled material.
- d) Its recycling operations produce materials that:
  - i. Are eligible for SCS-103 Recycled Content certification; or
  - ii. When incorporated into finished products, they can conform with the Material and Resources criteria for recycled content for building products according to the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building rating system.

### 1.2 Intended Users

1.2.1 The SCS-106 Standard is applicable to operators (e.g., individuals, businesses, organizations, or agencies) who conduct recycling operations.

### 1.3 Language

1.3.1 The verb “shall” is used in criteria to indicate a requirement of the standard. The verb “should” is used to indicate preferred requirements. The verb “can” is used to express an ability to perform an action. The verb “may” is used to express permission to perform an action that is not a requirement. The verb “might” is used to express a condition that could potentially exist.

## 2. Scope and Limitation

---

### 2.1 Scope

2.1.1 This Standard applies to the verification of recycling operations and the materials they produce. It supports Recyclers who are making a claim regarding the classification, quantity, type, and the next destination of the material processed.

- 2.1.2 The Standard allows the Recycler's input and output materials to be qualified and quantified for the purpose of supporting claims about the percentage of salable and further recyclable material, in comparison to waste that is landfilled, incinerated, or classified as treated or untreated hazardous waste.

## **2.2 Limitations**

- 2.2.1 SCS-106 is a voluntary standard. It is not intended to replace any legal or regulatory requirements that may be applicable to Recyclers. Conformance with the requirements of this Standard does not guarantee regulatory compliance.
- 2.2.2 This Standard does not address safety, health, and performance concerns, if any, associated with its use.
- 2.2.3 This Standard does not address concerns with the applicable permitting, handling, and disposal of hazardous wastes. It is the responsibility of the user to establish appropriate conditions for such considerations and to determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.
- 2.2.4 This Standard does not address any environmental impact tradeoffs that may be associated with every life-cycle phase of the product(s). Therefore, there may be environmental impact tradeoffs associated with a verified operator and/or the product it produces.

## **3. Conformance**

---

### **3.1 Conformance to the Standard**

- 3.1.1 In order to be considered conformant to this Standard, the Recycler shall meet all applicable requirements.
- 3.1.2 The Recycler shall undergo an audit against this Standard by an SCS Standards-approved certification body that follows the SCS-106 Certification Body Requirements.

### **3.2 Complaints and Appeals**

- 3.2.1 A client has the right to appeal a verification decision within 30 days of receiving the final report. Appeals shall be submitted to the certification body for evaluation and resolution.
- 3.2.2 Complaints shall be handled directly by the approved certification body. If a satisfactory resolution is not found, a complaint may be elevated to SCS Standards.

## 4. References

---

### 4.1 References

- Code of Federal Regulations Title 40: Protection of Environment, Part 261- Identification and Listing of Hazardous Waste
- Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims (available at: [www.ftc.gov](http://www.ftc.gov))
- ISO 14021:2016, “Environmental labels and declarations – Self-declared environmental claims (Type II environmental labeling)”
- ISO 14024:2018, “Environmental labels and declarations – Type I environmental labeling – Principles and procedures”
- ISO 14020:2022, “Environmental labels and declarations – General principles”
- ISO 9001:2015, “Quality management systems – Requirements”
- ISO 14001:2015, “Environmental management systems – Requirements with guidance for use”
- SCS-106 Certification Body Requirements
- SCS Standards Certification and Approval Requirements
- SCS-103 Certification Standard for Recycled Content
- SCS-110 Certification Standard for Zero Waste
- U.S. Green Building Council Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design (LEED) Green Rating Guides (available at: [www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org))

## 5. Terms and Definitions

---

**Affidavit.** A written sworn statement of facts voluntarily made by a person authorized to do so by law.

**Certification Body.** An SCS Standards-approved third-party organization authorized to conduct independent audits to assess conformance with this Standard.

**Claim.** Oral, written, implied, or symbolic representation, statement, or advertising or other form of communication presented to the public or buyers of products that relates to a product’s environmental benefit, e.g., the percentage of recycled content.

**Component.** A part, accessory, material, or ingredient used in the manufacture of a product.

**Conversion Factor.** The mass fraction of recovered material converted to recycled material in a system boundary.

**Data Review Period.** The period for which data is submitted for an audit.

**Hazardous Waste.** A waste listed as hazardous by governing authorities<sup>1</sup>; or a waste that is characterized by being ignitable, reactive, corrosive, or extraction procedure toxic.<sup>2</sup>

**Input.** Any recovered material entering the recycling operations.

**Output.** Any material leaving the Recycler's recycling operations. This includes, but is not limited to, finished products, intermediate materials, waste destined for a landfill, further recyclable materials, and wastes to be permanently stored.

**Post-Consumer Material.** Material generated by households or by commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities in their role as end-users of the product that can no longer be used for its intended purpose. This includes returns of materials from the distribution chain (Source: ISO 14021:2016).

*Note: To be considered post-consumer, any material returned from the distribution chain must come from end-users.*

**Pre-Consumer Material.** Material diverted from the waste stream during the manufacturing process. Excluded is the reutilization of materials such as rework, regrind, or scrap generated in a process and capable of being reclaimed within the same process that generated it (Source: ISO 14021:2016). Also known as "post-industrial material."

**Recovered Material (also known as Reclaimed Material).** Material that has been separated, diverted or removed from the waste stream in order to be recycled or used to substitute virgin raw materials (ISO/DIS 15270-4:2025).

**Recycled Material.** Material that has been reprocessed from recovered material through a process and made into a final product or intermediate that can be incorporated into a product (adapted from ISO/DIS 15270-4:2025).

*Note: SCS may interpret a material to be recycled if it is "used, reused, or reclaimed" according to United States Government Code of Federal Regulations Title 40: Protection of Environment Part 261.1:*

- (4) A material is "reclaimed" if it is processed to recover a usable product, or if it is generated...
- (5) A material is "used or reused" if it is either:
  - (i) Employed as an ingredient (including use as an intermediate) in an industrial process to make a product (for example, distillation bottoms from one process used as feedstock in another process). However, a material will not satisfy this condition if distinct

---

<sup>1</sup> United States Environmental Protection Agency, "Defining Hazardous Waste: Listed, Characteristic and Mixed Radiological Wastes," US EPA, June 15, 2022, <https://www.epa.gov/hw/defining-hazardous-waste-listed-characteristic-and-mixed-radiological-wastes#listed>.

<sup>2</sup> United States Department of Agriculture, "Hazardous Waste Management," USDA Agricultural Resource Service, August 12, 2016, <https://www.ars.usda.gov/northeast-area/docs/safety-health-and-environmental-training/hazardous-waste-management/>.

- components of the material are recovered as separate end products (as when metals are recovered from metal-containing secondary materials); or*
- (ii) *Employed in a particular function or application as an effective substitute for a commercial product (for example, spent pickle liquor used as phosphorous precipitant and sludge conditioner in wastewater treatment).*

**Recycling.** Activities to obtain recovered resources for use in a process or a product, excluding energy recovery.<sup>3</sup>

**Records.** Any information in written, visual, or electronic form that documents the activities undertaken by a client to demonstrate conformance with this Standard.

**Supplier.** An organization that supplies a material, product, or service to the Recycler.

**Scrap.** Also known as secondary material. Rejected or discarded material generated by a manufacturing process. Examples of scrap include material from manufacturing equipment, such as startup/shut down material, side/end trimmings, material generated from sanding, off-spec/non-conforming product, etc.

**System Boundary.** The activities, processes, and temporal and geographical limits of what is included and what is not included in an assessment.

**Recycler.** An entity undergoing verification that physically handles, transports, produces, or converts pre-consumer and/or post-consumer recovered material. Also referred to as a client.

**Waste.** Anything for which the generator or holder has no further use, and which is discarded or is released to the environment (Source: ISO 14021:2016).

---

<sup>3</sup> Based on ISO 59004:2024 Circular economy—Vocabulary, principles and Guidance for implementation.

## 6. Requirements

---

### 6.1 General

- 6.1.1 The Recycler shall clearly define its system boundary, including:
- a. The recycling facility and its geographical location;
  - b. Recovered material(s) (inputs) and recycled material(s) (outputs); and
  - c. Activities and processes.
- 6.1.2 The Recycler shall provide a diagram and description of their recycling process that shows their traceability and material tracking system, including all recovered material, all internal material flows (e.g., reuse or recycling of scrap), all processes (e.g., cleaning, shredding, grinding, re-granulating), and all outputs.
- 6.1.3 The Recycler shall maintain practices for segregating inputs and outputs that clearly identify materials by type, source, and destination through processing stages, including receiving, storage, transfer to shipping, and shipping.
- 6.1.4 The Recycler shall maintain current and valid local, state, and federal permits required to conduct recycling operations.
- 6.1.5 The Recycler shall demonstrate that all recovered materials are being processed, recycled, or otherwise properly managed within 12 months of receipt, and that its facility is not acting as a long-term storage facility for unusable recovered materials.
- 6.1.6 The Recycler shall demonstrate that scale(s) and other relevant instruments used for measuring materials onsite are calibrated at least once annually.
- 6.1.7 Data shall be available on a dry weight measurement basis, or in standard reporting units, with a conversion factor that allows calculation on a dry weight basis.
- 6.1.8 The data review period shall be a period of 12 months (i.e., the four most recent consecutive quarters). For new recycling operations, the data review period shall be a period including at a minimum the most recent quarter.
- 6.1.9 The Recycler shall maintain a procedure on their supplier selection process, including any requirements that suppliers must meet in order to supply recovered material to the Recycler.
- 6.1.10 The Recycler shall establish and maintain a record-keeping procedure that includes the following:
- a. A five-year record retention period;
  - b. Records of all suppliers and inputs;

- c. Records of all buyers and recycled materials; and
- d. Records of all materials disposed of.

## 6.2 Inputs

- 6.2.1 The Recycler shall demonstrate that recovered material(s) can be traced back to an identifiable origin, including:
- a. Source, including the name of the supplier;
  - b. Date of receipt;
  - c. Material composition;
  - d. The amount of material obtained;
  - e. Whether the material is post-consumer or pre-consumer waste; and
  - f. Any processing steps undergone before the material reached the Recycler's facility (e.g., crushing or washing glass).

*Note: Based on risk, suppliers may be subject to further review by the certification body.*

- 6.2.2 The Recycler shall maintain inventories of the recovered materials used and stored, including the amount, the material, and whether it is post-consumer or pre-consumer.
- 6.2.3 The Recycler shall maintain records of the amounts and units of measurement for the scrap reused within its recycling operations, if any.

## 6.3 Outputs

- 6.3.1 The Recycler shall calculate their conversion factor using the following equation:

$$\text{Conversion Factor} = \frac{\text{Total amount of recycled material}}{\text{Total amount of recovered material}}$$

- 6.3.2 The conversion factor shall be calculated:
- a. For each recovered material (recovered materials that are similar in nature may be grouped together); and
  - b. Using data from the data review period (e.g., the previous 12-month period).<sup>4</sup>
- 6.3.3 For the data review period, the Recycler shall document net salable material output (recycled material).

---

<sup>4</sup> A shorter time period may be approved by the certification body if requested based on the Recycler's production schedule.

- 6.3.4 The Recycler shall document the amounts and units of measurement of waste generated by its recycling operations and shall identify any hazardous waste generated, including its quantity, type, and destination. The Recycler shall classify and dispose of hazardous waste according to applicable local regulations.
- 6.3.5 The Recycler shall demonstrate that recycled materials are usable as a feedstock for additional manufacturing or recycling, or as a finished product.
- 6.3.6 The Recycler shall document the next immediate destination (e.g., incineration, further recycling, sales, etc.) of each output (e.g., salable, donations, waste).
- 6.3.7 The Recycler shall demonstrate that the destination of all recycled materials is documented, including:
- a. Name of buyer;
  - b. Date of sale and delivery;
  - c. Material components/formulation (bill of material); and
  - d. The amount of material sold.
- 6.3.8 Material that has no further use (e.g., the immediate next destination is incineration or landfill) shall count as waste and not as recycled material.

## 7. Claims and Labeling

---

### 7.1 General Conformance Requirements

- 7.1.1 All claims language and/or label (i.e., logo) usage shall:
- a. Be reviewed and approved by the certification body prior to use;
  - b. Conform to the certification body's labeling and language requirements; and
  - c. Comply with U.S. Federal Trade Commission guidelines or other national guidelines, as applicable, if outside of the U.S.
- 7.1.2 Any claims made by the Recycler in connection with this Standard shall only be in reference to its own verification.

### 7.2 Acceptable Claims

- 7.2.1 Upon verification, the Recycler may make claims such as the following:
- a. From [DATE] to [DATE], [Company Name] has demonstrated [X]% yield of recycled [material] from processed waste.

- b. From [DATE] to [DATE], [Company Name] has demonstrated [X]% yield of recycled [material] from [waste type, e.g., post-consumer carpet].
- c. From [DATE] to [DATE], [Company Name] has recovered [X] tons of pre-consumer [material] waste, on a dry weight basis, and demonstrated [X]% yield of recycled [material].

7.2.2 To make a claim on the waste a recycling facility generates as a result of its recycling operation, the recycling facility shall certify to SCS-110 Zero Waste Certification.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> SCS-110 Zero Waste Certification: <https://www.scsstandards.org/standards/certification-standard-zero-waste>