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Packaging and the environment — Marking for material identification

Emballage et environnement — Marquage pour l'identification des matériaux

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ISO copyright office
CP 401 • Ch. de Blandonnet 8
CH-1214 Vernier, Geneva
Phone: +41 22 749 01 11
Email: copyright@iso.org
Website: www.iso.org

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 122, *Packaging*, Subcommittee SC 4, *Packaging and the environment*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to specify a number of markings used to identify packaging materials, with the aim to support the efficient collection, sorting, recycling and recovery after use. The collection and sorting of used packaging is a prerequisite for a successful recycling and recovery process.

Although several countries and regions have established marking systems for material identification, the absence of such systems in other countries and regions has created difficulties for individuals and organizations to properly identify packaging materials. Waste operators lacking sufficient means of mechanical sorting face problems in properly separating the used packaging materials, when specified identification markings are lacking. Moreover, packaging material markings are not always linked to collection symbols for packaging, which depend on the relevant packaging waste management systems.

The usefulness of markings for packaging materials is limited in countries and regions with established collection and sorting schemes, where the latest technologies are used to separate the packaging materials fractions.

This document contains a number of identification markings with their sorting and recycling systems which are successfully used in some countries and regions.

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Packaging and the environment — Marking for material identification

1 Scope

This document shows some examples of markings (words, numbers or symbols) for the identification of packaging materials. This document is applicable to all types of packaging in order to enable the identification of the materials used.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 21067-1, *Packaging — Vocabulary — Part 1: General terms*

ISO 21067-2, *Packaging — Vocabulary — Part 2: Packaging and the environment terms*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 21067-1 and ISO 21067-2 apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/

4 Markings

4.1 Markings of packaging materials

Tables 1 to 6 outline some of the most commonly used markings of packaging materials categorized by country and/or region. Where necessary, a short explanation is given about the meaning and purpose of the markings outlined below.

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