

The Blue Angel for Printed matter (DE-UZ 195)



Information for manufacturers and the retail trade

www.blauer-engel.de/en/uz195

- resource-conserving and environmentally friendly manufacturing process
- low emission printing
- made from 100% recovered paper

www.blauer-engel.de/en/uz195

- resource-conserving and environmentally friendly manufacturing process
- low emission printing
- mainly from recovered paper

Reliable guidance for sustainable purchasing

The Blue Angel – the environmental label from the German federal government – has set stringent standards for environmentally friendly, healthy and durable products and services in an independent and credible way since 1978. The Blue Angel is Germany's most well-known environmental label. You can thus benefit from the clear competitive advantages and added level of trust that this environmental label enjoys in the economy and amongst consumers. The label's credibility and competence, its objective criteria, its institutionalised award process and its governmental links increase your corporate and brand value.

The advantages offered by the Blue Angel

The Blue Angel allows you as a company to present your environmental management practices and product responsibility in a credible way and set yourself apart from your competitors. Furthermore, you can use the Blue Angel for Printed Matter to demonstrate to customers that you

- preserve resources due to a high proportion of recovered paper in the paper and cardboard used
- use appropriate inks, varnishes and adhesives that do not reduce the high-quality recyclability of the paper fibres
- avoid the use of additives and materials that are damaging to the environment and health
- reduce energy usage, waste and environmentally harmful emissions



© zefart / shutterstock

Printed matter from A to Z

The Blue Angel certifies a large range of printed matter, such as newspapers, brochures, advertising inserts, flyers, billboards, decorative calendars and books, that can be produced using various different printing processes.

Resource-conserving and environmentally friendly manufacturing process, recyclable

Printed matter are products that are very highly disseminated and which require a high amount of energy and resources during their manufacturing process. This applies to both the production process for the paper and also the printing process itself. Paper products made out of recovered paper perform significantly better in terms of their use of

resources, waste water load and water and energy consumption than paper products made predominantly from virgin fibres. Those products certified with the Blue Angel for Printed Matter are thus only permitted to use recycled paper certified with the Blue Angel. Some inks, varnishes and adhesives hamper the recycling of paper from printed matter because they are very difficult to remove. Therefore, the Blue Angel requires that these substances can be removed at a reasonable cost during the preparation of the recovered paper. Emissions of organic solvents can escape into the environment during the printing process and contribute to the production of ozone. Optimising procedures during the printing process can also reduce energy usage, waste paper and air and water emissions. Printed matter that has been awarded the Blue Angel environmental label thus represents an environmentally-friendly alternative to standard printed matter available on the market.

Criteria: What requirements does the Blue Angel place on printed matter?

- The use of paper and cardboard certified with the Blue Angel that has been produced using 80 to 100 percent recovered paper (DE-UZ 14a, DE-UZ 72, DE-UZ 56).
- Avoidance of materials that hamper the recycling process.
- Avoidance of substances that are damaging to health and the environment e.g. by
 - » limiting the heavy metals in printing inks, dyes, toners and varnishes.
 - » excluding the use of azo dyes that can break down into amines as colourants.
 - » setting limits for the use of aliphatic and aromatic hydrocarbons in printing inks and varnishes.
 - » limiting the use of biocides.
 - » limiting the use of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in printing inks and varnishes.
 - » setting requirements on emissions of fine particulate matter.
- Exclusion of hazardous materials such as carcinogenic substances or substances with long-lasting negative effects on water.
- Limits on the emission of organic solvents during the printing process.
- If printing inks, varnishes, solvents or cleaning agents contain or are produced on the basis of renewable raw materials, these materials must be cultivated sustainably and must not be sourced from genetically modified plants.
- Requirements for minimizing waste paper.
- Requirements for energy consumption.

Compliance verifications

Compliance with all requirements must be verified in accordance with the Basic Award Criteria – e.g. in the form of test reports, safety data sheets or legally binding manufacturer declarations.

Application, use of the environmental label and costs

RAL gGmbH is responsible for handling the applications and concluding the contracts (E-mail: umweltzeichen@ral.de, phone: +49 228 68895-190). Use of the environmental label is limited to the period of validity of the Basic Award Criteria. The current Basic Award Criteria are valid until 31/12/2027. RAL gGmbH – the awarding body for the environmental label – will charge a one-off handling fee of 600 Euro for the application. The annual fee is based on the annual sales of the certified product. If the sales figures are, for example, between 1 and 2.5 million Euro, the annual fee will be 1,500 Euro. Further information is available at <https://www.blauer-engel.de/contribution-scheme>.

More Information: www.blauer-engel.de/en

March 2025

