

The Blue Angel for Writing Utensils and Stamps (DE-UZ 200)



Information for manufacturers and the retail trade

www.blauer-engel.de/en/uz200

- resource-conserving and environmentally friendly manufacturing process
- long lifespan
- low level of harmful materials

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 Writing Utensils and Stamps to demonstrate to customers that you

- use resource-conserving materials for the product and packaging.
- take measures to extend the service life of the products.
- avoid substances that are damaging to the environment and health.



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Writing utensils and stamps from A-Z

The Blue Angel certifies all writing utensils and stamps designed for writing, drawing, painting and marking that are intended for use in offices, schools or the home environment on various different types of surfaces. The writing utensils must have the shape of a pen or pencil. The Blue Angel can also be used to certify refill systems for these writing utensils and stamps, as well as paintbrushes for use in a schools or for hobby or professional painters.

Resource-conserving and environmentally friendly manufacturing process

“Writing utensils and stamps” covers a wide range of different products that are used on a daily basis in e.g. office workplaces and schools. As these products are everyday items produced in large quantities with a relatively short service life, they should be designed in the most resource-efficient way possible, preferably using recycled materials sourced from so-called post-consumer waste. Post-consumer waste is sourced from private households, agriculture, commerce and industry.

This type of waste constitutes by far the largest portion of all waste and should thus be recycled where possible. Another way of conserving resources is the use of materials based on renewable raw materials such as wood, paper or bioplastics. If bioplastics are used, their raw materials must be certified to avoid any conflicts with other environmental and social goals. Other important prerequisites for the responsible use of resources are the extension of the service life of the products, e.g. using refill systems, as well as the use of packaging that produces as little waste as possible. To facilitate the recycling of the packaging, the products should avoid using a mix of materials or composite materials. From the perspective of consumer protection, it is also important that writing utensils and stamps, as well as the respective writing and stamping media, are free of hazardous ingredients as far as possible. Writing utensils and stamps that have been awarded the Blue Angel environmental label thus represents an environmentally-friendly alternative to standard products available on the market.

Criteria: What requirements does the Blue Angel place on writing utensils and stamps?

- The use of resource-conserving materials, e.g. using plastics from post-consumer recycled materials or certified renewable raw materials.
- Extension of the service life by offering refill systems for mechanical lead pencils, fountain pens, ballpoint pens, ink pens, gel pens and stamps.
- Guaranteeing that the product has a good fitness for use by placing requirements on the lightfastness and filling quantity of ballpoint pen ink cartridges.
- Exclusion of hazardous substances in writing and stamping media, varnishes, adhesives, printing inks, surface coatings and plastic granules, such as e.g. carcinogenic and mutagenic substances.
- Avoidance of substances damaging to health and the environment in the writing and stamping media, e.g. by
 - » Restricting the use of volatile organic compounds
 - » Excluding the use of azo dyes that can break down into amines and fragrances
 - » Excluding the use of carcinogenic or potentially sensitizing colourants
 - » Excluding the use of substances containing polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons
 - » Migration limits for metals.
- Requirements for the sales packaging and outer packaging, e.g. must use paper and cardboard containing at least 80% recycled materials.

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 supplier 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 www.blauer-engel.de/en/costs.

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

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