

Water Quality Association
Gold Seal Certification Program's
Literature and Gold Seal Logo Policy



Version 11

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WQA Literature and Gold Seal Logo Policy

Issue Date: 08-18-2022

Version 11

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Ownership & Registration of the Gold Seal Marks	4
Liability.....	4
SECTION I: GOLD SEAL MARK SPECIFICATIONS	5
Table 1 – Gold Seal Marks.....	5
SECTION II: PROPER USE OF THE GOLD SEAL AND CONFORMANCE STATEMENT	6
General Requirements for the use of the Gold Seal on Certified Products	6
Company Name Requirements	6
Potentially Misleading Statements	6
Unique Trade Designations for Certified Products.....	7
Dealers, Distributors, and Re-packagers	7
The Use of Asterisks/Superscripts/Footnotes	7
Template Literature	7
Internet Policy.....	7
Marking of Products.....	8
Table 2 – Required Literature	9
Conformance Statement.....	9
Table 3 – DWTU Systems Conformance Statement Examples	10
Use of WQA Gold Seal Mark on DWTU Components.....	10
Packaging	11
Replacement Element Data Plates.....	11
Table 4 – Non-DWTU Conformance Statements.....	11
Pipe and Pipe Fitting Marking Requirements.....	12

WQA Literature and Gold Seal Logo Policy

Issue Date: 08-18-2022

Version 11

SECTION III: CLAIMS AND CLAIM DELINEATION	12
Uncertified Claims.....	12
Fits Claims	12
Acceptable Delineation Examples	12
WQA Tested, Uncertified Claims.....	13
SECTION IV: AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF THE GOLD SEAL MARK.....	14
Use of the Gold Seal Mark on a Non-Certified Product.....	15
What “Authorization” to use the Gold Seal Mark means:.....	15
Appendix A -- Example Violations	16

WQA Literature and Gold Seal Logo Policy

Issue Date: 08-18-2022

Version 11

Introduction

The Gold Seal is used to identify those products that have undergone the certification process and are currently certified and listed by the WQA Gold Seal Certification Program.

Clients who have products currently certified and received written confirmation from WQA to use the Gold Seal Mark can use it according to the labeling requirements in this policy. The most current certified product listings can be viewed on WQA's website at www.wqa.org.

WQA does not authorize the use of the Gold Seal to any organization outside of the Water Quality Association.

All advertising, promotional material, literature, and packaging used with a WQA Certified product must adhere to the Water Quality Association Gold Seal Logo Policies. Any use of the Gold Seal on any product, advertising, webpage, etc., controlled by the certifying client, may be subject to review and approval by WQA.

The WQA Member Logo shall not be used on any product or product literature at any time but may be used in advertising if the certifying client is also a member of WQA.

Ownership & Registration of the Gold Seal Marks

WQA and its Gold Seal Marks are registered trademarks of the Water Quality Association. The Marks are registered in the United States, Canada, Korea, Taiwan, Australia, Brazil, India, and Mexico. The laws of each country protect the usage of the Marks.

Ownership and control of the Gold Seal Registered Mark used or applied, whether purchased or authorized, is with WQA.

Liability

WQA must preserve and protect the integrity and prestige of the WQA Gold Seal Mark. Any deviation from these guidelines for the use of the Mark can confuse and damage the reputation of the Water Quality Association.

In the event these guidelines are violated, WQA retains the right to direct the user to cease use of the WQA Gold Seal Mark, and may sue to enjoin misuse by any user, whether WQA Certified or not, member or non-member of the association, to recover actual and punitive damages. It is the right of WQA to determine whether these guidelines have been violated or whether the Gold Seal Mark has been misused.

WQA Literature and Gold Seal Logo Policy

Issue Date: 08-18-2022

Version 11

SECTION I: GOLD SEAL MARK SPECIFICATIONS

The Gold Seal Marks can be either white with black or gold with black lettering, as seen below. There are no restrictions on the size of the Gold Seal; however, the lettering must be legible, and any variations of the logo design, including alternate colors, must be pre-approved by the WQA Gold Seal Product Certification Department.

Digitized logo art is available upon request. All versions have country code indicators for Canadian 'c' and the United States 'US' markets. The Canadian version of the mark is required for sale in Canada.

Table 1 – Gold Seal Marks



The following Mark-specific requirements apply as well.

On the Gold Seal with the words “Water Quality Association in the center circle:

- The words “TESTED AND CERTIFIED” shall appear across the top of the Seal.
- The words “UNDER INDUSTRY STANDARDS” shall appear across the bottom of the Seal.
- For use on products that will be sold in Canada, a small “c” shall appear at the 8 o’clock position.

On the Gold Seal with “WQA” in the center circle:

- The words “TESTED & CERTIFIED” shall appear across the top of the Seal.
- The words “INDEPENDENTLY” shall appear across the bottom of the Seal.
- For use on products that will be sold in Canada, a small “c” shall appear at the 8 o’clock position.

SECTION II: PROPER USE OF THE GOLD SEAL AND CONFORMANCE STATEMENT

General Requirements for the use of the Gold Seal on Certified Products

WQA requires that all Certified products use the Gold Seal Mark to identify that a product is Certified unless it is physically impossible or otherwise authorized by WQA. In cases where it is physically impossible, the Gold Seal Mark should be used on a document such as the bill of lading or performance data sheet. Products authorized to not bear the Gold Seal Mark in any form shall have a listing note under each applicable standard to indicate that this requirement has been waived.

The Gold Seal Mark shall only be used on Certified products produced at WQA authorized locations. The Gold Seal may not be used deceptively or misleadingly such that it suggests, implies, or states certification for any product or claim that is not certified.

Company Name Requirements

The company under which the product(s) are listed on the WQA website must be identified in the literature.

Claims

When performance claims are cited in the literature, the Gold Seal may be used if the claims are certified. Uncertified claims need to be delineated from the Gold Seal. For more information on the delineation of claims, please see the "Claim Delineation" section further down in this policy. Please reference WQA schemes for further details on systems certified for material safety and/or structural integrity only.

Potentially Misleading Statements

Misleading statements shall not be placed on any product packing or literature. Statements of performance claims shall conform to the requirements of this policy:

- **Remove vs. reduce:** Remove implies 100% reduction. Because it is impossible to guarantee a 100% reduction for any single contaminant, there are two options available:
 - When stating that the product **removes** a specific contaminant, also state the percent removal as verified by test data in the same sentence. For example, "Product ABC will remove up to 99% chlorine. See performance data sheet for details."
 - Use the word "reduce" rather than "remove." For example, "Product ABC reduces chlorine, VOC and Cyst. See performance data sheet for details."
- **Absolute statements:** Statements such as "Product ABC removes all organic contaminants" are unacceptable. All absolute statements must be clearly defined as to the terms they apply. For example, a statement such as "All organic contaminants as tested through the VOC surrogate and as listed on the performance data sheet is *reduced by the percentages shown" is acceptable.
- **Herbicides and Pesticides:** General comments that a system that reduces herbicides and pesticides cannot be used. Instead, reference to the specific contaminants must be made. The connection may be made by stating, "see performance data sheet for specific herbicides reduced."

WQA Literature and Gold Seal Logo Policy

Issue Date: 08-18-2022

Version 11

- **Implied Health Claims:** Independent studies cannot be referenced to imply that exposure to certain contaminants your system reduces will result in higher disease incidences.

Unique Trade Designations for Certified Products

Each Certified product shall have a unique trade designation stated on the Certified product. The Company shall not have the same trade designation but may have the same brand name for Certified and non-certified products.

Dealers, Distributors, and Re-packagers

Dealers, distributors, or re-packagers wishing to use the Gold Seal must either identify the listed company and listed trade designation as it appears on the WQA website or obtain their own certification through WQA. Certified customers must inform any dealers or retailers, distributors, etc., of the rules and guidelines for proper usage of the Gold Seal mark. Certification does not “transfer” to sellers unless WQA approves.

The Use of Asterisks/Superscripts/Footnotes

Asterisks/superscripts/footnotes may be used to allow for clarification of statements that are made on product packaging or literature. An asterisks/superscript does not need to be on the same page/side of the product as its reference. The use of asterisks shall follow these parameters:

- Asterisks/superscripts/footnotes shall be legible.
- Asterisks shall reference the footnote location if not on the same panel.
- The language referenced by the asterisks/superscript shall be relevant.
- Each footnote indicator shall be unique unless they share the same footnote reference.

Template Literature

WQA allows manufacturers to produce templates of literature pieces. These templates are usually used in a family of products when the only difference between pieces is the trade designation. Templates can be used to meet WQA literature and Gold Seal requirements to repeatedly avoid unnecessary reviews of the same piece of literature.

Internet Policy

WQA recognizes the use of the internet as a viable method of meeting literature requirements. Therefore, the following requirements apply to all pieces of product literature and advertising on the internet:

- The standard requires certain pieces of product literature to be available. The following requirements shall be on the product or product literature itself. All other requirements may be downloadable or viewable from a manufacturer’s website if that website or a QR Code is referenced on the product or product literature.
 - Company Name as listed on the WQA website
 - Data Plate
 - Trade designation
 - A reference to the certifying company’s website

WQA Literature and Gold Seal Logo Policy

Issue Date: 08-18-2022

Version 11

- If a company uses the internet to meet literature or Gold Seal requirements, all WQA Gold Seal literature and mark requirements apply. The company shall keep all standard required information (Example: Manual, Performance Data Sheet) available on their websites even after the product has been withdrawn from the market.
- Any use of the Gold Seal on any webpage controlled by the certifying company may be subject to review by WQA.

Marking of Products

The customer shall submit documentation indicating how the product will be marked as certified (product, product label, product packaging, data plate, a print line, bill of lading, etc.). The product or product literature shall be marked with the following:

- WQA Mark (see Table 1)
 - WQA Mark shall be legible.
 - If the product(s) are shipped in bulk, they are exempt from using the Mark on the bulk shipment packaging. In these cases, the WQA Gold Seal Mark, Company name or identification, brand name, or designation shown in the official listing shall appear on the bill of lading or another document shipped with the product.
- WQA Conformance Statement Placement
 - The conformance statement shall have the complete standard name listed (E.g., NSF/ANSI/CAN 61)
 - The conformance statement shall be directly next to/immediately adjacent to the Gold Seal for Data Plates (labels), Manuals, and Performance Data Sheets.
- WQA Conformance Statement Claims
 - Only certified claims shall be included in the conformance statement.
 - If any performance-based contaminant reduction claim or statement indicating suitability for use in another company's system is not certified, the Conformance Statement must be directly next to/immediately adjacent to the Gold Seal Mark, and the uncertified claim needs to be delineated (see Claim Delineation below).
- Company name as specified on the official listing.
- Product Name or Trade Designation as specified on the official listing.

All literature requiring review shall be defined by the certification standard(s) for which the product is certified.

WQA Literature and Gold Seal Logo Policy

Issue Date: 08-18-2022

Version 11

Table 2 – Required Literature

Literature the standard requires to be reviewed by the certifier.			
	CERTIFIED DWTU SYSTEMS (or where the replacement element data plate serves as the system data plate)	DWTU CERTIFIED COMPONENTS & CERTIFIED REPLACEMENT ELEMENTS (for use in Certified Systems)	Non-DWTU SYSTEMS AND COMPONENTS
Product Manuals	Approval required	Required if applicable under standard section**	Required if applicable under standard section**
Performance Data Sheets	Approval required	Literature Not Applicable*	Literature Not Applicable*
Data Plates	Approval required	Literature Not Applicable*	Literature Not Applicable*
Packaging	Required if applicable under the standard**	Required if applicable under the standard**	Required if applicable under the standard**
Bill of Lading	Required only if not meeting the above requirements ***	Required if not meeting the above requirements ***	Required only if not meeting the above requirements ***
Certificates of Analysis/Conformance	Required only if not meeting the above requirements ***	Required if not meeting the above requirements ***	Required if not meeting the above requirements ***

*While these pieces of literature are typically not associated with replacement elements or components, if they do exist for such products, they can be evaluated by WQA to determine if they comply with this policy and the standards.

** Certain standards require product packaging.

***Bills of lading and certificates of analysis/conformance only require WQA approval if they are utilized in place of the typical literature needed to meet the standard requirements.

Conformance Statement




The Gold Seal Mark (any approved Marks from Table 1) shall appear as specified in Tables 3 or 4 below.

WQA Literature and Gold Seal Logo Policy

Issue Date: 08-18-2022

Version 11

Table 3 – DWTU Systems Conformance Statement Examples

COMPLETE DWTU SYSTEMS	REPLACEMENT ELEMENTS	DWTU COMPONENTS
		 <p style="text-align: center;">COMPONENT</p>
<p>System Certified by WQA to <i>(insert appropriate Standard and number)</i> for the reduction of _____.</p>	<p>Certified by WQA to <i>(insert appropriate Standard and number)</i> when used in <i>(name of the certified system)</i> for the reduction of _____.</p>	<p>This (name of component) is tested and Certified by WQA to <i>(insert appropriate Standard and number)</i> for material (and structural integrity if it applies) requirement(s) only.</p>

Examples of acceptable marking for DWTU Systems are shown in Table 3 and shall include the following information:

Complete Systems Examples:

1. *(insert trade designation)* Certified by the Water Quality Association according to *(insert appropriate Standard(s))* for the reduction of *(list contaminants)*.
2. *(insert trade designation)* Certified by the Water Quality Association according to *(insert appropriate Standard(s))*; see performance data sheet for specific claims.

DWTU Component Examples:

1. For components tested for structural integrity, the words “for material and structural integrity requirements only.”
2. For components that have not been tested for structural integrity, the words “for material requirements only.”

Use of WQA Gold Seal Mark on DWTU Components

Components certified by the WQA shall bear the word “COMPONENT” under the Gold Seal Mark. This wording is required to prevent confusion between Certified systems and Certified components.

- If a component is certified to only a portion of a system standard, it must state “COMPONENT” under the Gold Seal Mark.
- If a component is certified to only a portion of a system standard and a complete section of a component standard (i.e., NSF/ANSI/CAN 61), the component statement or the word “COMPONENT”

WQA Literature and Gold Seal Logo Policy

Issue Date: 08-18-2022

Version 11

will not be required. Still, in the Company's system web listing, WQA will note that it was certified as a component.

Packaging


The packaging of Certified treatment units must comply with one of the following options:

- The Gold Seal Mark does not have to be used on the Certified product's packaging. No performance claims can be stated if the Gold Seal Mark is not displayed on the company's packaging.
- The Gold Seal Mark can be displayed on the Certified product's packaging without stating individual or specific performance claims. Suppose product(s) packaging contains individual or specific performance claims. In that case, the Gold Seal Mark must be displayed on the product packaging along with all the required marking statements listed in the program-specific sections of the policies.

Replacement Element Data Plates

Where replacement element data plates serve as the system data plate, and the replacement element fits into a head, the head shall be labeled with a trade designation to ensure that the correct replacement element is used with the correct head.

Table 4 – Non-DWTU Conformance Statements

Option 1	Option 2
 <p>This (name of component) is tested and Certified by WQA against (<i>insert appropriate standard and number and section if desired</i>).</p>	<p>NSF/ANSI XX by WQA</p> <p>This can be used with or without the Gold Seal *A listing note shall be added to the listing if the Gold Seal is not used.</p>

Point-of-Entry Systems for NSF/ANSI/CAN 61

Point-of-entry systems conforming with the materials safety requirements of NSF/ANSI/CAN 61 and not certified for drinking water contaminant reduction performance must use the Gold Seal Mark for complete functional systems in Table 3 with the statement that the product is not certified for contaminant reductions or structural integrity.

NSF/ANSI/CAN 60

NSF/ANSI/CAN 60 requires using the certifier's mark on the product.

NSF/ANSI/CAN 372

NSF/ANSI/CAN 372 statements can claim “Lead-Free” or “Lead-Free Compliance” or “Low Lead.”

Pipe and Pipe Fitting Marking Requirements

Plastic and steel pipe and pipe fittings shall be marked according to the industry’s normative reference Standards, such as applicable ASME, ASTM, and AWWA Standards. The customer may choose to either use the Gold Seal listed in Table 4 or instead use the following wording to indicate the product as marked:

“WQA NSF14-pw” for potable water applications

“WQA NSF14-rfh” for radiant floor heating applications

The marking requirements are typically printed directly on the pipe. The print line shall be sent to WQA for approval.

SECTION III: CLAIMS AND CLAIM DELINEATION

Uncertified Claims

WQA requires that any uncertified claims be delineated from the Gold Seal Certification Mark. The following are examples of uncertified claims:

1. Performance/reduction claims on a system certified to a Drinking Water Treatment Unit standard, but only some of the claims are included in the certification.
2. Performance/reduction claims on a system certified to NSF/ANSI/CAN 61 and/or NSF/ANSI/CAN 372 only.
3. Performance/reduction claims being made on a component certified to a Drinking Water Treatment Unit standard for materials safety and structural integrity only. If the component is also a replacement element evaluated for use within a certified system, then certified performance claims can be made following the standard requirements.

Fits Claims

Claims that the product fits into another company’s system.

1. These claims should always be delineated as per this example. “This filter has not been tested or certified by WQA for use in *competitors name* system.”

Acceptable Delineation Examples

The following examples are acceptable means to differentiate Gold Seal Program Certified claims and non-Gold Seal-related claims in advertising and product(s) literature.

1. Making a statement that WQA did not evaluate the claim.

WQA Literature and Gold Seal Logo Policy

Issue Date: 08-18-2022

Version 11

2. Statements that the claim is based on manufacturer, independent, or third-party test data.

All statements delineating and differentiating certified and uncertified claims must appear in clear and conspicuous typeface and print size. The statements must either be next to the uncertified claim or include a reference, such as a footnote, to where the delineation is being made.

Uncertified claims need to be delineated each time they are made. If the Gold Seal is used on a website, delineation of uncertified claims not only needs to be on the page the Gold Seal is present but also on any page for the same product accessible from the main page.

WQA Tested, Uncertified Claims

In some cases, a customer may do testing on a product but not use that test data to support certification. The below gives guidance on how to reference the WQA testing in product literature:

1. The customer can make a WQA-tested claim on a product if the Gold Seal is not present and the product is not certified to any standard by WQA.
2. The customer can make a WQA-tested claim on a certified product if the claim is not covered by any standard that is part of WQA's scope of certification.

NOTE: For tested but not certified claims within the scope of a standard, an "Independently tested" claim can be made. Example: A product certified to NSF/ANSI 372 and tested for chlorine reduction under NSF/ANSI 42 cannot reference WQA as the testing body in their literature. Instead, the company can state that the product was independently or third-party tested for chlorine reduction.

SECTION IV: AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF THE GOLD SEAL MARK

The Gold Seal is used to identify those products that have undergone the certification process and are currently Certified by the WQA Gold Seal Certification Program.

Companies with certified products that have received written confirmation from WQA to use the Gold Seal Mark can use it according to the labeling requirements in this policy. The most current certified product listings can be viewed on WQA's website at www.wqa.org.

Companies who are Members of WQA, but do not have any products certified in the Gold Seal program, cannot use the Gold Seal Mark.

The WQA Member Logo shall not be used on any product or product literature.

The Certification department evaluates all products according to industry standards and WQA Gold Seal Certification Policies and Schemes. Suppose the product complies with the applicable industry standard(s), WQA Certification Policies, and Schemes. In that case, it will be certified, listed in the Gold Seal Program, and approved to use the Gold Seal Mark.

Contaminant reduction claims can be claimed for entire systems, depending on the specific industry standard and whether the product complies with the standard. However, these claims SHALL NOT be applied to certified components outside the system with which that component has been certified for such claims.

Written authorization to use the Gold Seal Mark is sent to the company of a Certified product when the Gold Seal Certification department has completed its evaluation of the product and has listed it at www.wqa.org. The approved literature and Gold Seal Certificate will be housed on the Customer Portal.

The Gold Seal Mark may not be used to show that products are "pending certification" or are "in the process" of obtaining certification. Only products listed on the website can use the Gold Seal Mark within the limitations of this policy.

Possession of a Gold Seal Certificate or approved literature does not exclusively authorize a company to use the Gold Seal Mark. If a company does not comply with all WQA Policies and "use" restrictions of the Gold Seal, the WQA certificate is no longer valid.

No Company or person shall apply or use a Mark in connection with a product or represent in any way that the product is Certified until authorization to mark the product is obtained.

Use of the Gold Seal Mark on a Non-Certified Product

Companies using the Gold Seal Mark on a non-certified product(s) will be instructed to cease and desist use of the Mark on the product(s) not Certified by WQA. For a second occurrence within two (2) years, WQA may withdraw Certification for all company products. WQA may also take other appropriate enforcement action.

What “Authorization” to use the Gold Seal Mark means:

- The Gold Seal Certification department’s evaluation has found a representative sample of said system or component to be in conformance with a specific industry standard.
- Only the trade designation and contaminant claims listed under the said company on the WQA website are Certified and are authorized to be used in association with the Gold Seal Mark.
- That the Gold Seal can be used on the literature reviewed and approved by WQA.
- After “Authorization” is granted, not all applications of the Gold Seal need to be reviewed and approved by WQA. All Gold Seal use must meet the requirements of this policy.
- Indicates the product, and only the product is certified. The certification does not transfer to the company as a whole or any of its distributors.

WQA Literature and Gold Seal Logo Policy

Issue Date: 08-18-2022

Version 11

Appendix A -- Example Violations

Literature example	The proper way to present literature	Reason
Company A is a member of the WQA Association and does not have certified products. But Company A has the Gold Seal and member logo on their products and website.	Company A has the member logo on their website only.	Company A must be certified with WQA Gold Seal to use the Gold Seal mark. Member logos cannot be placed on products.
Company A has a trade designation (Trade designation 1) certified with WQA. Their literature states, "All products from company A are certified by the Water Quality Association."	Trade designation 1 is certified by the Water Quality Association	Only certified product trade designations can have the Gold Seal associated with them.
Trade designation 1 reduces up to 99% of herbicides and pesticides.	Trade designation 1 reduces up to 99% of herbicides and pesticides. *See performance data sheet for details.	Blanket statements of removal or reduction must be accompanied by references to actual test data, in this example, the performance data sheet.
Company A sells XYZ products to Company B. Company B sells XYZ products on their website and claims the product is manufactured by Company B and that the product is certified by WQA.	Company B <u>may</u> use the Gold Seal logo <u>if</u> Company B indicates that XYZ product is manufactured by Company A and certified through WQA by Company A.	Certified companies must be able to be found on the WQA website. Only approved companies can claim certification through WQA.
Company A certified a product at WQA in 2010 but is no longer found on the WQA website, but Company A still has the Gold Seal on products and their website.	The Gold Seal must be removed immediately from all referenced areas.	Certification is not a one-time event but a process of continuous improvement that must be maintained. Any company not listed on the WQA website violates WQA policy and is liable for legal action.