



TÜVRheinland®

DIN CERTCO

Precisely Right.



# Certification Scheme

## Recyclable

according to

**DIN EN ISO 14021**

**and Minimum standard for determining the recyclability of  
packaging subject to system participation pursuant to  
section 21 (3) VerpackG  
(Edition: June 2025)**

## Foreword

DIN CERTCO was founded in 1972 by DIN Deutsches Institut für Normung e. V., is now part of the TÜV Rheinland Group and is the certification body for issuing DIN marks and other certification marks for products, persons, services as well as companies based on DIN standards and similar specifications. Due to its independence, neutrality, competence and many years of experience, DIN CERTCO enjoys a high reputation both at home and abroad.

In order to prove the functionality of the system and our competence as a certification body, we have been accredited, certified or recognised by independent domestic and foreign bodies in both the voluntary and legally regulated areas. [Our accreditations](#).

Recycling is an important part of the sustainable use of resources and part of product responsibility. Recyclability is already an important component and must be taken into account during the development of packaging and products.

The minimum standard for assessing the recyclability of packaging subject to system participation was published by the ZSVR in agreement with the Federal Environment Agency.

DIN CERTCO assesses the quality of recyclability to close material cycles and the associated ecological and economic added value.

A *DINplus* mark from DIN CERTCO makes the sustainable use of resources in products and packaging visible.

The basis for certifying the recyclability of products and packaging is DIN EN ISO 14021, the minimum standard for packaging in accordance with Section 21 (3) of the German Packaging Act (VerpackG).

In addition to the General Terms and Conditions of TÜV Rheinland DIN CERTCO and the Testing, Registration and Certification Regulations of DIN CERTCO, this certification program forms the basis for suppliers of recyclability of their packaging to label it with the "DINplus" certification mark.

The "DINplus" quality mark gives consumers the confidence that an independent, neutral and competent body has carefully examined and evaluated the test criteria. External monitoring also ensures that the product quality is maintained during ongoing production. The customer therefore receives added value that they can take into account when making their purchase decision.

Recyclable products and packaging are awarded the "DINplus" certification mark if they meet the requirements listed in section 4 in accordance with the procedure described in this certification scheme.

All certificate holders can be viewed on the daily up-dated homepage of DIN CERTCO ([DIN CERTCO - Certificates and Registrations](#)).

## Start of validity

This certification program is valid from 2025-06-01

## Previous issues

## Changes

**Remark**

The German version of the Certification Scheme “Products made from recycled materials” shall be taken as authoritative. No guarantee can be given to the English translation.

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## 1 Scope

This certification scheme applies to the recyclability of packaging and, in conjunction with the test principles listed below, contains all the requirements for awarding the "DINplus-Recyclable" certification mark.

This certification scheme applies to packaging that is subject to system participation pursuant to § 7 (1) VerpackG and must therefore meet the requirements of the minimum standard for the assessment of recyclability pursuant to § 13 (3) VerpackG.

This includes packaging made of plastic, PPK, glass and metals. Unfilled packaging is considered as a complete packaging system and includes packaging components such as labels, sealing films, lids and closures or adhesive applications. Separate consideration of packaging components is only possible if they must be necessarily and irrevocably separated for use and consumption. Likewise, outer packaging for transport protection purposes and packaging components that separate from each other solely through mechanical stress, so that they appear individually in the first sorting stage (snap-on and snap-off lids), must be considered separately. Separable packaging components are tested/assessed individually and can be certified as combined packaging.

This certification scheme specifies requirements for the packaging itself as well as for its testing, monitoring and certification.

## 2 Test and certification specifications

The documents listed below form the basis for testing and certification. In the case of dated references, only the version referred to applies. In the case of undated references, the current edition of the referenced document applies, including all amendments.

DIN EN 14021	Environmental labels and declarations - Environmental supplier declarations (Type II environmental labeling)
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§ 21 (3) VerpackG	Minimum standard for assessing the recyclability of packaging subject to system participation
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- this certification program
- the General Terms and Conditions of TÜV Rheinland DIN CERTCO
- the associated scale of fees of DIN CERTCO
- DIN CERTCO Testing, Registration and Certification Regulations

## 3 Definition of terms

### Packaging component

Part of the packaging that can be separated by hand or using simple mechanical means.

### Packaging type

Packaging that differs from each other in essential certification-relevant characteristics, such as material structure or material, is defined as a type.

### Sub-type

Packaging of a type that differs from one another only in non-certification-relevant characteristics. Sub-types are combined into a packaging group.

### Packaging groups

Packaging with the same material structure. They differ only in the contents and/or filling quantity. They must not differ in process-specific criteria such as color.

Combined packaging:

Packaging consisting of separable components.

Material

Material which (in the case of plastics) is primarily made up of organic chain molecules and is used, for example, to manufacture semi-finished products or products. Materials usually contain other inorganic or low-molecular organic substances that influence the processing or application properties.

Materials can also consist of materials other than plastics.

Semi-finished product

Optional intermediate stage between material and product, e.g. multilayer laminates consisting of several layers of material.

## **4 Product requirements**

In conjunction with the referenced standards and laws, the certification program defines requirements for packaging that can be classified as recyclable.

In general, the DIN EN 14021 standard defines the requirements for recyclability and provides specifications for the use of recyclability labels.

The existence of suitable collection points for the recycling of products is necessary and must be clearly described in the case of limited availability. In addition to the certification mark, the percentage of recyclability must be clearly indicated for the recyclability label.

In the case of composite packaging, the percentage of recyclability per component must be clearly labelled or the lowest percentage for the total packaging must be indicated.

In addition to this standard, the minimum standard for assessing the recyclability of packaging subject to system participation pursuant to § 21 (3) VerpackG is used in accordance with this certification scheme. The recyclability is determined in accordance with Section 4 and Annexes 1 to 3.

## **5 Testing**

### **5.1 General information**

DIN CERTCO uses its recognized testing laboratories to carry out the necessary tests as a basis for the assessment and certification of packaging and products.

### **5.2 Types of testing**

#### **5.2.1 Initial test**

The initial test is a type test (design test, type examination) which serves to determine whether the packaging meets the requirements of section 4 of this certification program.

### 5.2.2 Surveillance

The monitoring test is carried out at regular, fixed intervals (annually) and serves to determine whether the certified packaging corresponds to the type-tested packaging in the production phase.

It is commissioned by DIN CERTCO and must be verified in due time by a positive test report.

### 5.2.3 Supplementary test

A supplementary test is carried out if additions, extensions or changes (see section 6.9) have been made to the certified packaging that affect conformity with the underlying requirements.

The type and scope of the supplementary test are determined on a case-by-case basis by DIN CERTCO in consultation with the testing laboratory.

### 5.2.4 Special test

A special test takes place

- if defects are detected
- after production has been suspended for a period of more than 6 months
- at the justified request of DIN CERTCO
- at the written request of third parties, if they have a particular interest in the maintenance of orderly market activity in terms of competition or quality

The type and scope of a special test are determined in each individual case by DIN CERTCO in consultation with the testing laboratory in accordance with the purpose.

If defects are found during a special test, or if a special test is carried out due to the suspension of production, the certificate holder shall bear the costs of the special test procedure.

If no defects are found during special tests at the request of a third party, the costs shall be borne by the applicant third party.

## 5.3 Sample collection for testing

The samples for the initial and monitoring tests are usually supplied by the manufacturer to the testing laboratory commissioned with the test. The costs for this are borne by the manufacturer.

The number of samples for testing the packaging is agreed between DIN CERTCO and the testing laboratory, insofar as it is not regulated in the valid test specifications.

## 5.4 Performance of the testing

After application with document template according to section 6.1, all documents relating to the sample to be tested are sent by DIN CERTCO to the testing laboratory.

Upon receipt of the test samples together with the submitted documents, the testing laboratory checks whether the test is feasible. If this is the case, one test sample per type (see section 6.2) is tested by the testing laboratory.

- Checking the packaging design and composition

- Testing the availability of suitable technologies for material recycling
- Testing the sortability
- Testing for recycling incompatibilities
- For fibre-based packaging, a test according to Cepi recyclability laboratory test method - Part I- Recycling mill with Conventional process and Assessment acc. to 4Evergreen fibre-based packaging recyclability evaluation protocol is required
- To identify the recyclable material, an NIR spectrum must also be recorded.

## 5.5 Test report

The testing laboratory informs the client of the results of the tests in a test report. This must be submitted to DIN CERTCO in the original.

As a rule, the test report must not be older than 6 months at the time of application. In individual cases, older test reports may also be recognized if the testing laboratory confirms in writing the validity of the information stated in the test report.

The test report must comply with DIN EN ISO/IEC 17025 and contain at least the following information.

- Name and address of the manufacturer
- Name and address of the applicant (if different from the manufacturer)
- Test basis (standards and certification program) incl. date of issue
- Type of test (e.g. type test, supplementary test, etc.)
- Date of the test
- Results and assessment of the test
- Name and signature of the person responsible for the test
- Other points required by standards, if applicable

## 6 Certification

Certification within the meaning of this certification scheme is the conformity assessment of a product by DIN CERTCO on the basis of test reports from its recognized testing laboratories. The products to be certified are checked for compliance (conformity) with the requirements specified in section 4 and subsequently monitored.

The right to use the "DINplus" quality mark is granted by issuing a corresponding certificate.

Semi-finished products and materials can be registered with the scope of testing of an initial certification. These semi-finished products and materials are suitable for the production of recyclable packaging. However, the final packaging must also be tested within the scope of initial certification. For registered semi-finished products and materials, the certificate holder is only issued a right to use the mark for marketing and advertising purposes, but not for labeling the product. A registration number is issued when the certificate is issued.

### 6.1 Application for certification

Applicants can be either manufacturers in accordance with § 4 of the German Product Liability Act (ProdHaftG) or distributors who, with the written consent of the certificate holder, place the products on the market under their own responsibility within the meaning of the German Product Liability Act.

The following documents must be submitted to DIN CERTCO by the applicant:



- Application for certification in original and with legally binding signature
- Completed data sheet (part of the application form)
- Disclosure of the chemical composition of the packaging components (incl. substances contained in quantities of less than 1% by mass)
- Safety data sheets in accordance with REACH for each additive used to prove the harmlessness of the additives
- Design drawing of the packaging system
- Sending of packaging samples

After receipt of the application, the applicant receives an order confirmation from DIN CERTCO with a procedure number and information on the further course of the procedure and any missing application documents.

## **6.2 Classification into packaging groups**

Packaging groups can be assessed if the material structure of the individual packages in this group is identical. They may differ in filling material and filling quantity. Packaging in a packaging group may not differ in process-relevant properties such as coloring.

## **6.3 Conformity assessment**

DIN CERTCO carries out the conformity assessment on the basis of the application documents submitted. In particular, the test report is used to assess whether the packaging meets the requirements of the certification program and the standard.

DIN CERTCO will inform the applicant in writing of any possible deviations.  
The applicant is informed in writing by DIN CERTCO about possible deviations.

## **6.4 Sublicense**

A sub-certificate must be issued if a certified type/model of a product is placed on the market by a company other than the (main) certificate holder. A sub-certificate can only be issued on condition that the products are identical. Sub-certificates are issued with their own registration number. The validity of a sub-certificate and the main certificate is always the same. If the main certificate expires, the sub-certificate will also automatically expire.

## **6.5 Register numbers of products, materials and semi-finished products**

Structure of the register number:

- |                         |        |
|-------------------------|--------|
| - Product               | P3R000 |
| - Material              | P3W000 |
| - Semi-finished product | P3H000 |

## **6.6 Certificate and right to use the mark**

After successful examination and conformity assessment of the submitted application documents, DIN CERTCO issues a certificate to the applicant and grants the right to use the "DINplus" quality mark in conjunction with an associated registration number.



Packaging for which the right to use the "DINplus" quality mark has been granted must be marked with the "DINplus" quality mark and the associated register number.

The mark and register number may only be used for the type for which the certificate has been issued and which corresponds to the type-tested packaging.

One registration number is assigned per type. The same register number is issued for design types (subtypes, packaging groups) of one type (see section 6.2).

Materials and semi-finished products are only granted the right to use the mark for marketing and advertising purposes. They are certified and receive a registration number (P3Wxxx or P3Hxxx). One registration number is assigned per type.

The same right to use the mark applies to sub-certificates for materials and semi-finished products as for the corresponding main certificate.

In addition, the General Terms and Conditions of TÜV Rheinland DIN CERTCO and the Testing, Registration and Certification Regulations apply.

## 6.7 Publications

All certificate holders can be called up on a daily basis via the DIN CERTCO homepage [DIN CERTCO - Certificates and Registrations](#). Manufacturers, users and consumers use this research option to find out about certified products.

## 6.8 Validity of the certificate

The certificate is valid for 3 years. The period of validity is specified in the certificate. When the certificate expires, the right to use the mark also expires.

## 6.9 Extension of the certificate

If the certification is to be maintained beyond the date specified in the certificate, DIN CERTCO must be provided with a current test report on the recording of an NIR spectrum in good time before the expiry date.

Proof of compliance with the requirements of the testing and certification principles according to section 2 is provided within the scope of section 5.2.1, which is evaluated by DIN CERTCO. A new test according to Cepi recyclability laboratory test method -Part I- Recycling mill with Conventional process and Assessment acc. to 4Evergreen fibre-based packaging recyclability evaluation protocol is not required if the product, material or semi-finished product to be certified has not changed in its composition and/or structure.

## 6.10 Expiry of the certificate

If the re-assessment for conformity with the standard according to section 5 has not taken place in time before the expiry of the validity period, the right to use the quality mark "DINplus" and the registration number expires without the need for an explicit notification by DIN CERTCO.

In addition, the certificate may expire, for example, if:

- the surveillance measures according to section 8 are not carried out on time or are incomplete,
- the "DINplus" quality mark is misused by the certificate holder,
- the requirements arising from this certification scheme or its accompanying documents are not fulfilled
- the applicable certification fees are not paid on time,
- the requirements for the issue of the certificate are no longer met.

## 6.11 Amendments/additions

### 6.11.1 Changes/additions to the product

The certificate holder is obliged to notify DIN CERTCO immediately of any changes to the product. DIN CERTCO decides in consultation with the testing laboratory to what extent a test according to section 0 is to be carried out and whether it is a significant change. The test report on this is forwarded by the testing laboratory to DIN CERTCO.

If DIN CERTCO determines a significant change, the certificate with the corresponding registration number expires. A new application for initial certification and the right to use the "DINplus" quality mark can be submitted for the modified product.

The certificate holder is also obliged to notify all changes to formal details (e.g. certificate holder or his address).

The certificate holder may apply to DIN CERTCO for an extension of the existing certificate for further types (sub-types) of the same type. DIN CERTCO will decide whether these additions require a supplementary examination. If the requirements are met, the design types are included in the certificate for the already certified packaging and are considered part of it.

### 6.11.2 Changes to the test basis

If the test basis of the certification changes, an application for amendment of the certification must be submitted within 6 months of notification by DIN CERTCO and, as a rule, conformity with the amended test basis must be demonstrated after 12 months by submission of a positive test report.

## 6.12 Defects in the packaging or the product

If defects are found in certified packaging on the market, the certificate holder will be requested in writing by DIN CERTCO to rectify the defects.

DIN CERTCO will decide in consultation with the testing laboratory whether the defect is serious or minor.

The defects must also be rectified immediately on installed packaging or packaging in stock. The manufacturer must prove to DIN CERTCO within 3 months by submitting a test report on a special test in accordance with section 5.2.4 that the defects have been rectified and that the rejected packaging once again meets the specified requirements.

If the manufacturer does not comply with these deadlines, the certificate and thus the right to use the "DINplus" quality mark will be withdrawn from him and the distributor.

If there are still grounds for complaint, DIN CERTCO will initially suspend the certificate and at the same time grant a final deadline for rectifying the defects. If the certificate holder does not comply with the request or does not comply within the set deadline, or if the elimination of the defects can again not be proven, the certificate expires.

## **7 Self-monitoring by the manufacturer**

The manufacturer must take suitable quality assurance measures to ensure that the packaging properties confirmed during certification are maintained. This can be ensured by a factory production control (FPC) directly geared to the packaging or production and also by measures within the framework of a quality management system (QM system) in accordance with the DIN EN ISO 9000 ff series of standards.

### **7.1 Factory production control (FPC)**

Factory production control is the continuous monitoring of the production process by the manufacturer, which ensures that the packaging produced complies with the specified requirements.

Corresponding records must be submitted to DIN CERTCO or its authorized representatives upon request. They must contain at least the following information:

- Designation of the test object
- Date of manufacture
- Date of the test
- Result of the test and, if provided, comparison with the specified requirements
- Signature of the person responsible for the test
- Date of the recording

In the event of a negative test result, the manufacturer must immediately take all measures to rectify the defect. Defective packaging must be marked and discarded. The test must be repeated regularly to determine whether the defect has been rectified.

### **7.2 Quality management system**

DIN CERTCO recommends the establishment and certification of a quality management system in accordance with the DIN EN ISO 9000 ff. series of standards.

## **8 External monitoring by DIN CERTCO**

### **8.1 General information**

An essential part of the certification is the continuous surveillance of the certified packaging and the certified packaging during the entire term of the certification. Surveillance takes place at regular intervals of 1 year.

DIN CERTCO checks and evaluates the conformity of the packaging with the requirements specified in the certification program by means of surveillance tests.

## **8.2 Surveillance tests (control tests)**

The surveillance tests take place annually in the scope of a type test and the recording of an NIR spectrum.