

Information for consumers

The eco-INSTITUT label at a glance

Living, eating, working – we spend almost 90% of our lives in enclosed rooms here in Germany. And there are often **various pollutants** present there: construction products and floor coverings, as well as furniture and other furnishings, can release **harmful substances** – called volatile organic substances (VOCs) – into the indoor air. Some products also contain problematic chemicals, such as **plasticisers or flame retardants**, which can become detached from the products. However, **odours** also have a significant influence on our well-being.

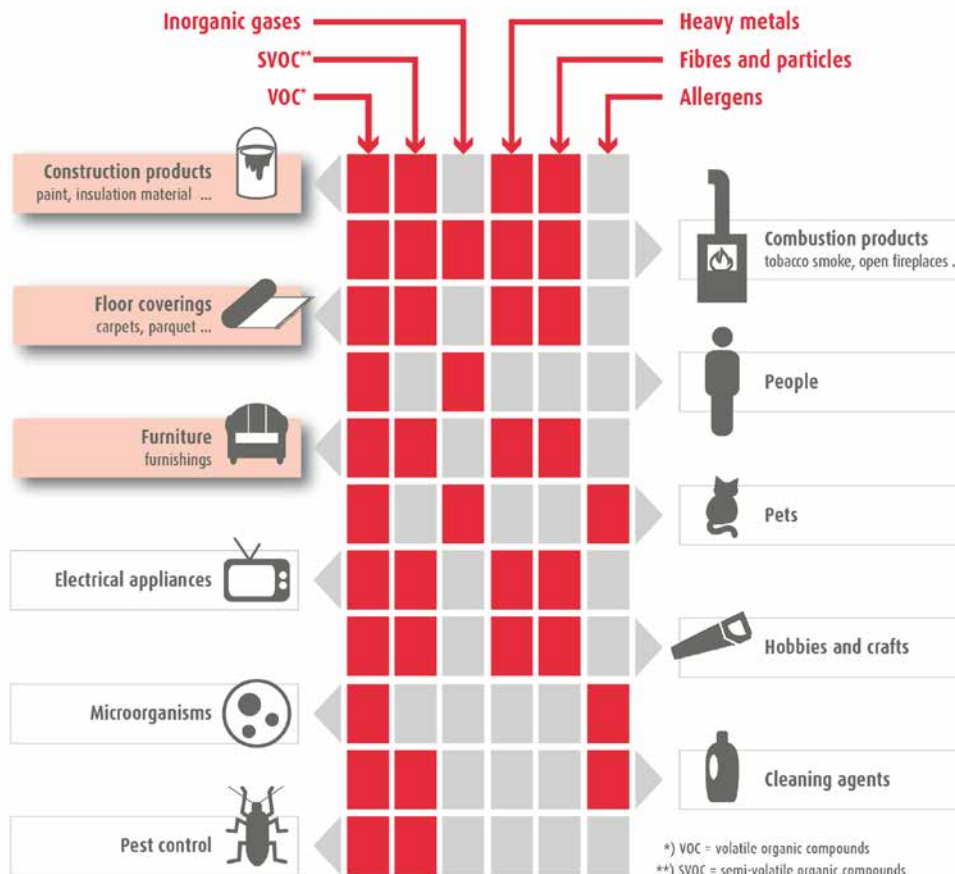


The legislature has **not adequately regulated** interior pollutants. For example, there are no uniform EU-wide requirements for construction products and furniture in order to protect health.

This is where environmental and health seals such as the **eco-INSTITUT label** come in: manufacturers can have their products tested on a voluntary basis for various pollutants.

Products that have been awarded the eco-INSTITUT label must meet **strict requirements for emissions (outgassing), harmful substances and odour**. Only products that are particularly low in pollutants and emissions can receive the quality seal.

Construction products, floor coverings, furniture and other furnishings are among the most common sources of **indoor pollutants**.



The most important facts about the eco-INSTITUT label

- The eco-INSTITUT label identifies construction and furnishing products, furniture, cleaning products, mattresses and bedding that are **particularly low in pollutants and emissions** and are therefore **harmless to health and environmentally friendly**
 - **Users and processors** of the products, and the **environment** are **fully protected**, including by prohibiting chemicals that are particularly harmful to health and the environment
 - The eco-INSTITUT label is **awarded for 2 years**. A complete reassessment is required to renew
 - eco-INSTITUT is recommended by **leading independent consumer media**:
Verbraucherzentrale NRW
LABEL-ONLINE (www.label-online.de)
WDR Haushalts-Check
SCHÖNER WOHNEN Magazine
ÖKO-TEST Magazine
- Certified products are **regularly and extensively tested** for emissions, harmful substances and odours

Emissions

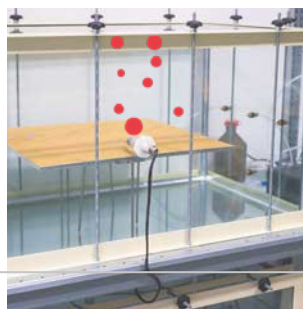


What are emissions?

Many products for indoor use emit gaseous substances, some of which are hazardous to health – called volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which can be found in indoor air. Some products also emit semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), which are less mobile and mainly accumulate in household dust.

How can emissions be measured?

Outgassing from products can be measured in emission test chambers. Glass or stainless steel chambers simulate the climatic conditions of a real indoor space.



Odours



Odours have a crucial influence on our well-being – this is particularly noticeable in enclosed spaces.

How can the odour be measured?

The human nose is unbeatable – no technical device can compare to it at the moment. To conduct odour tests, you therefore need well-trained employees – and their noses.



The eco-INSTITUT label ...
... helps when selecting health-compatible and environmentally friendly products for indoor use.
... helps to reduce pollutant contamination in your own home.

Substances

What harmful substances can be contained in products?

- Plasticisers (e.g. in floor coverings ...)
- Flame retardants (e.g. in insulating materials, upholstery materials ...)
- Heavy metals (e.g. in paints/varnishes ...)
- Pesticides (e.g. in carpets, upholstery fabrics ...)
- ...

Frequently asked questions about the eco-INSTITUT label

How do I know whether the certification is “genuine”?

Each product awarded the eco-INSTITUT label receives an **individual certification number**. This number allows the validity of the label to be checked at www.eco-institut-label.de (Certified Products).



Zertifizierungsnummer

I have bought a product that has been awarded the eco-INSTITUT label. Now I am interested in finding out more detail and would like to see the test report for the product.

For legal reasons, we are unable to publish test results or test reports.

If you are interested in the test report for a product certified by us, please contact the certificate holder (usually the product manufacturer). You can find this information at www.eco-institut-label.de (Certified Products).

The test criteria for the eco-INSTITUT label can also be viewed on the website mentioned above.



I am an allergy sufferer/my child is chronically ill. What products can you recommend to me?

As an independent testing institute, we are unfortunately unable to recommend individual products to you, nor can we tell you whether a product certified by us is suitable for certain allergies or illnesses.

However, we can assure you that every product bearing our label meets the most stringent pollutant and emission requirements and we also monitor this regularly.

If you have any questions about product components or detailed test results, please contact the certificate holder (usually the product manufacturer). You can find this information at www.eco-institut-label.de (Certified Products).



I have a test report for Blue Angel that was issued by eco-INSTITUT. What is that all about?

We are a recognised testing body for many other environmental and health labels such as natureplus, the QUL seal, Blue Angel and EMICODE® seal.

We carry out laboratory tests according to the requirements of each label. The actual certification or label is assigned by the respective label issuer (for example, this is RAL gGmbH in the case of the Blue Angel).



More information

Further information and FAQs can be found on the eco-INSTITUT label website:

www.eco-institut-label.de



About eco-INSTITUT

Healthy indoor air in focus

More than 30 years ago, eco-INSTITUT recognised that good-quality indoor air is crucial for health and well-being. Today, the independent, owner-managed company is one of the most experienced German laboratories for interior analysis.

eco-INSTITUT tests construction and furnishing products, furniture, electrical appliances, mattresses and bedding – frequent pollutants indoors – for unwanted chemicals and evaluates the products according to current legal requirements. In addition, the company is an accredited testing body for a variety of voluntary national and international environmental and health labels such as natureplus, Blue Angel and the EMICODE® seal.

The eco-INSTITUT label

eco-INSTITUT developed its own quality seal in 1995, resulting in today's eco-INSTITUT label, which identifies products for indoor use that meet the most stringent emission and

pollutant requirements. Today, approximately 300 products from around 130 manufacturers have been awarded the eco-INSTITUT label.

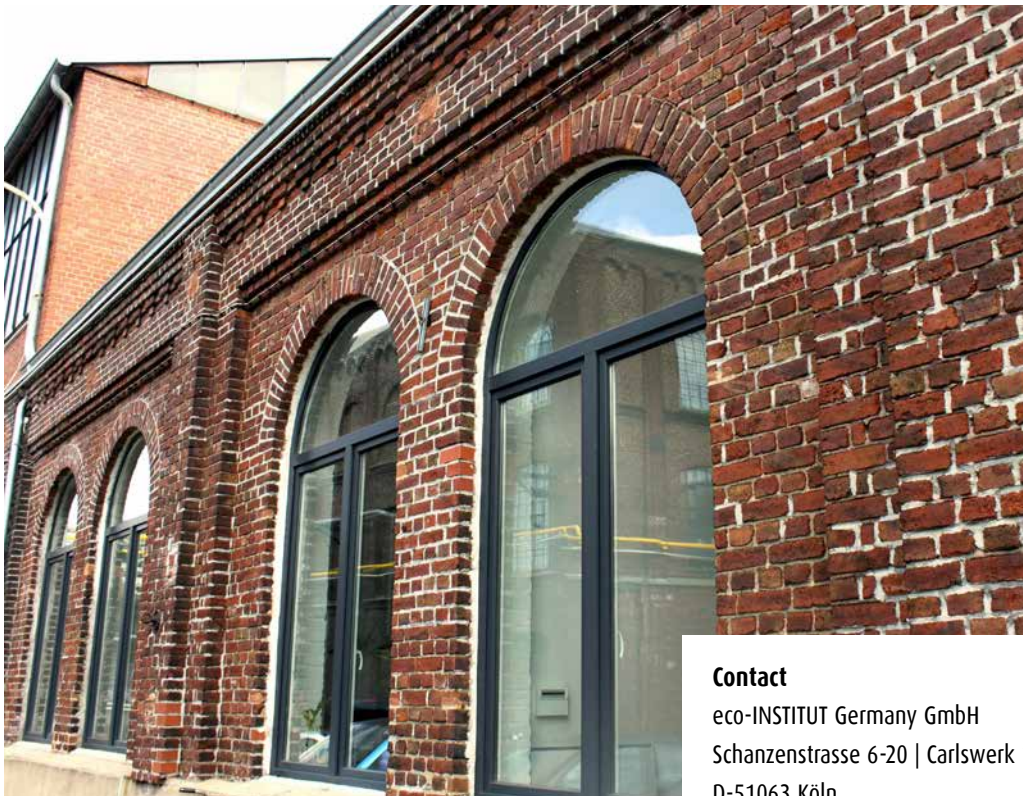
More information

www.eco-institut.de

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Emission testing is a focus of the eco-INSTITUT. In addition, the company carries out odour measurements and tests products for harmful substances such as plasticizers, heavy metals or pesticides.



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