



The Voice of
American Consumers



AMERICAN CONSUMER COUNCIL

A Non-Profit Consumer Information Organization



2011 Green CSM Self-Certification Program
Application Criteria, Forms & Instructions

www.americanconsumercouncil.org

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WELCOME TO THE
AMERICAN CONSUMER COUNCIL'S
Green CSM Self-Certification Program

A Message from ACC's President & CEO



Welcome to the American Consumer Council's 2011 Criteria for the **Green CSM** Self-Certification Program. The **Green CSM** criteria are among the most comprehensive for your organization to earn the recognition and respect of consumers for your commitment to Sustainability, Environmental Stewardship, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

The American Consumer Council is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization serving more than 100,000 members across the United States. In today's challenging economic environment, consumers want to do business with companies and organizations that care about consumers and our environment.

ACC created the **Green CSM** Self-Certification Program to enable businesses of all types and sizes to take a first step toward certification through a self-assessment and response to a series of critical questions taken directly from our popular **Green CSM** Certification Program. The **Green CSM** Self-Certification program is less resource intensive, while allowing your company to be recognized by consumers for their commitment to environmental compliance and corporate social responsibility.

By satisfactorily completing the **Green CSM** Self-Certification application, your organization will be recognized with the **Green CSM** Self-Certification designation for one year and be listed among those companies and organizations that have been self-certified by the American Consumer Council.

Please review the instructions and **Green CSM** Self-Certification criteria that follow. If you have any questions, please contact us at: info@americanconsumercouncil.org

Thomas Hinton

Thomas Hinton
President & CEO

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Facts and Information about ACC's Green CSM Self-Certification Program

What is the purpose of this booklet?

This booklet provides the instructions and forms necessary to apply for the American Consumer Council's **Green CSM** Self-Certification.

What is the goal of ACC's **Green CSM** Self-Certification Program?

The goal of **Green CSM** Self-Certification is to *encourage and recognize Green practices among small businesses and organizations operating in the United States, and promote Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) that preserves and enhances our planet.* We achieve this goal by encouraging businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations to operate in an environmentally efficient manner, through recognition of organizations that meet ACC's environmental compliance and CSR criteria with ACC's **Green CSM** Self-Certification.

What is a **Green Business**?

According to ACC's Consumer **Green Council (CGC)**, a "**Green Business**" meets minimum standards and practices in 5 Categories & Results areas that ACC evaluates and verifies through its formal certification application process. They are:

1. **Environmental Leadership & Results**
2. **Environmental Awareness & Results**
3. **Environmental Compliance & Results**
4. **Environmental Improvement & Results**
5. **Corporate Social Responsibility & Results**

What are the Benefits of the **Green CSM** Self-Certification Program to Your Business?

In recent years, thousands of ACC members have asked us for advice about making purchases based on a company's commitment to the **Green Movement** and to Corporate Social Responsibility. As more consumers are making purchasing decisions in favor of companies which exhibit environmental stewardship and corporate social responsibility, this self-certification program was designed to help consumers identify and better support **Green** businesses.

Some **direct benefits** organizations have realized through their commitment to a Green Initiative:

- Reductions in waste and utility costs
- Improvements in operational systems and equipment performance
- A higher market share of environmentally conscious customers
- A safer working environment which reduces work-related injuries and lost time
- Higher caliber job applicants wanting to work for an environmentally sensitive organization
- Higher productivity levels among employees who thrive in a **Green** work environment
- Higher levels of employee loyalty and stronger teamwork as a result of shared values among workers and management

ACC's **Green CSM** Self-Certification program is based on consumer-friendly criteria, and a methodology, which objectively and accurately assesses an organization's commitment to Sustainability, Environmental Stewardship and Corporate Social Responsibility.

How will your business benefit from ACC's **Green CSM** Self-Certification?

In addition to the benefits cited above, here are three proven ways your company may benefit from ACC's **Green CSM** Self-Certification:

1. Recognition in the marketplace as a leader in Sustainability and CSR through the **Green CSM** Self-Certification designation.
2. Attracting more customers who want to support companies that are in compliance with the most progressive environmental standards and practices in their industry.
3. A stronger bottom-line because **Green Practices** have proven to be cost effective and reduce operating costs.



How will ACC's Green **CSM Self-Certification Program recognize and improve your business performance?**

By completing the Green **C**SM Self-Certification your organization will better understand its current practices and areas for improvement in terms of environmental compliance and CSR.

ACC will also provide you with a certificate for display at your primary work site or facility.

This certification is valid for one year.

Certified applicants will also be formally acknowledged by ACC in press releases, media announcements and public recognition events through our Media Center and industry-specific announcements.

Finally, your organization will be formally acknowledged on our website and in ACC's member newsletter where we encourage our 100,000+ members to support your organization.

ACC will also coordinate additional press coverage with your public relations department or PR representatives of any certified applicant.

How does ACC's Green **CSM Self-Certification Program Work?**

To earn ACC's Green **C**SM Self-Certification designation:

1. Review ACC's Green **C**SM Self-Certification criteria in this document and complete the application requirements. There is no submission deadline. However, we request that all applicants file the *Intent to Apply* form prior to submitting their application. This helps ACC prepare for review of your application.
2. Submit the organizational responses to the criteria questions, following the guidance provided in this booklet.
3. A detailed feedback report from our certified assessors is available (please see page 17).

Once your organization has been self-certified, you may promote the Green **C**SM Self-Certification logo on your company materials and website for a one-year period. ACC will also add your company to our list of "Preferred Businesses" and encourage our 100,000+ members to support your business.

Green CSM Self-Certification Criteria

The following information describes the Green CSM Self-Certification Criteria, Certification Scoring Guidelines for Green CSM Self-Certification Assessor Teams, Application Guideline and Preparation tips.

The Criteria consist of three sections:

- 1. Organizational Profile**
- 2. Organizational Challenges**
- 3. Environmental Processes and Corporate Social Responsibility (five categories)**

The Organization Profile section is important because it helps both you and our Green CSM Self-Certification Assessor Team understand your business. By responding completely to the Organization Profile questions you will be helping the Assessors gain a thorough understanding of your business, its goals and objectives, its products/services, structure, facilities, competition, and regulatory environment.

The Key Organizational Challenges section is important because it helps both you and our Green CSM Self-Certification Assessor Team understand your competitive environment and challenges as well as your system for performance improvement in the areas of environmental compliance and CSR.

The Environmental Processes and Corporate Social Responsibility section is important because it helps both you and our Green CSM Self-Certification Assessor Team understand your Green CSM Self-Certification initiatives and activities, and the results that you are achieving through your processes.



Instructions:

Section 1 and 2 should be no more than two pages in length total.

Section 3 should be no more than ten pages in length total – approximately two pages per category item.

Section 1 – Organizational Profile

1. What are your organization's main product offerings?
2. What are the delivery mechanisms used to provide your products to your customers?
3. What are your stated purpose, vision, mission, and values?
4. What is your workforce profile including the number of employees and volunteers; their organized bargaining units, and any special health and safety requirements?
5. What are your major facilities, technologies, and equipment?
6. What is the regulatory environment under which your organization operates?
7. What are your applicable occupational health and safety regulations, and environmental, financial, and product regulations?
8. What are your applicable accreditation, certification, or registration requirements, and relevant industry standards?
9. What are your key customer and stakeholder groups?
10. What are your key types of suppliers, partners, and distributors? What role, if any, do they play in your innovation, Sustainability, Environmental Stewardship, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives?
11. What are your key supply chain requirements as they relate to environmental compliance and CSR?

Section 2 – Organizational Challenges

1. Describe your organization's competitive environment.
2. Describe your key strategic challenges and advantages.
3. Describe your system for performance improvement in terms of Sustainability, Environmental Stewardship, and CSR issues.

Section 3 – Environmental Processes and Corporate Social Responsibility

Category 1. Leadership Processes for Sustainability, Environmental Stewardship, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

- a. Describe how your senior leaders guide and sustain your organization through internal policies, rules, and procedures for improving air quality, managing chemical risks, addressing hazardous-waste, reducing Greenhouse gas emissions, and protecting America's water.
- b. Describe how your senior leaders ensure compliance with environmental laws, rules, and regulations.
- c. Describe how your organization establishes its strategy related to sustainability, environmental stewardship and corporate social responsibility, including how you address ethical and legal responsibilities.
- d. Describe how you address your strategic challenges and leverage strategic advantages.
- e. Describe how your organization measures success, related to leadership for environmental stewardship.



Category 2. Environmental Awareness

- a. Describe how your organization enhances environmental awareness, both within the organization, and with other stakeholders, including your key communities.
- b. Describe how your organization executes your action plans to consider and encourage environmental stewardship along the entire supply chain.
- c. Describe how your organization measures success, related to enhancing environmental awareness.

Category 3. Environmental Process Management & Improvement

- a. Describe how your organization designs, implements, manages, and improves its key environmental work processes to deliver customer value and achieve organizational success and sustainability.
- b. Describe how your organization measures success, related to environmental process management & improvement.

Category 4. Sustainable Development

- a. Describe your activities that create a pattern of resource use that aims to meet current needs while preserving the environment for the indefinite future.
- b. Describe your efforts to reduce, reuse, recycle and/or re-buy, in order to minimize the impact of your organization on the environmental chain, and reduce or eliminate pollution.
- c. Describe how your organization measures success, related to sustainable development

Category 5. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

- a. Describe how your organization proactively designs processes for corporate social responsibility through the preservation of natural resources beyond a compliance orientation.
- b. Describe how your organization capitalizes on opportunities to conserve resources utilized as inputs to organizational processes as well as reduce the organizational carbon footprint* generated as a result of the outputs of products and services provided by the organization.
- c. Describe how your organization measures success, related to corporate social responsibility.

***Informational Note:** A Carbon Footprint is made up of the sum of two parts: the direct/primary footprint and the indirect/secondary footprint:

1. The **primary footprint** is a measure of direct emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) from burning fossil fuels, including domestic energy consumption and transportation (e.g., cars and planes).
2. The **secondary footprint** is a measure of the indirect CO₂ emissions from the whole lifecycle of products we use – those associated with their manufacture and eventual breakdown.



Green CSM Certification Level Determination

ACC's Green CSM Self-Certification Assessor Team members are skilled professionals who have been trained and certified to assess applications from various industries and sectors. Specifically, Assessors will review your application to verify each response to the Green CSM Self-Certification Criteria.

“Process” refers to the methods your organization uses to address the Item requirements. The three factors used to evaluate process are *Approach*, *Deployment*, and *Learning*. **“Results”** refers to your organization's *outputs* and *outcomes* in achieving requirements. The three factors used to evaluate results are *Levels*, *Trends*, and *Comparisons*.

“Approach” refers to the methods used to accomplish the process; the appropriateness of the methods to the *Item* requirements; the effectiveness of your use of the methods; the degree to which the Approach is repeatable, and to what extent the Approach is based on reliable data and information.

“Deployment” refers to the extent to which your Approach is applied in addressing the *Item* requirements' relevance and importance to your organization; to what extent your Approach is applied consistently; and, to what extent your Approach is used by all appropriate work units in your organization.

“Learning” refers to refining and improving your Approach through cycles of evaluation of the results achieved; encouraging breakthrough change to your Approach through innovation; and, sharing refinements and innovations with other relevant work units in your organization.

“Levels” refers to numerical information that places or positions an organization's results and performance on a meaningful measurement scale.

“Trends” refers to numerical information that shows the direction and rate of change for your results. Trends provide a time sequence of organizational performance. A minimum of three historical (not projected) data points generally is needed to ascertain a trend.

“Comparisons” refers to your performance relative to appropriate comparisons, such as competitors or organizations similar to yours in your performance relative to benchmarks or industry leaders. Benchmarks refer to processes and results that represent best practices and performance for similar activities, either inside or outside the same industry.



Intent to Apply Form

The following organization intends to submit an application for the Green **C**SM Self-Certification Program.

ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION:

Organization:	
Contact Name:	
Title:	
Address:	
City:	
State:	Zip code:
Phone:	Fax:
Email address:	
How did you learn about the Green C SM Self-Certification Program?	

APPLICATION CATEGORY (PLEASE CHECK ONE):

- International Corporation (with multiple sites and more than 5,000 employees)
- Large Organization (over 1,000 employees and/or multiple sites)
- Mid-size Organization (500 - 1,000 employees and single site)
- Small Organization (10 - 500 employees and single site)
- Non-Profit Organization
- K-12 Education
- Higher Education (University, College, Vocational, Community College)
- Government or Public Sector Agency
- Health Care or Medical Facility

Please return to:

By e-mail (preferred):

jean@americanconsumercouncil.org

By Mail:

American Consumer Council
Attn: Jean Greer
Green **C**SM Program Administrator
Post Office Box 503016
San Diego, CA 92150-3016 USA

By Fax:

1-760-788-2024

Application Instructions

Please provide all information requested. A copy of the 2011 Intent to Apply Form must be included in electronic copy on the CD. Please contact the ACC office if you have questions or need any assistance in completing the forms, 1-760-787-0414.

1. APPLICANT:

Provide the official name and mailing address of the organization applying for Certification.

2. APPLICANT CATEGORY:

Indicate the category under which your organization is applying (Non Profit, Health Care, Small Organization, etc.). Applicants must employ at least ten full-time employees to be eligible to apply.

3. OFFICIAL CONTACT PERSON:

As the assessment proceeds, the applicant may need to be contacted for additional information or to schedule a site visit. Further communications between the applicant and ACC or the Senior Assessor assigned to the Green Team, will be limited to this Official Contact Point or the Alternate Contact Point (see 4, below).

The designated Official Contact Person should have both in-depth knowledge of the organization and a good understanding of the application. The Official Contact Person should have sufficient knowledge, availability, and authority to be to provide additional information, answer inquiries, and arrange a site visit, if necessary.

If the Official Contact Person changes during the course of the application process, please inform ACC.

4. ALTERNATE OFFICIAL CONTACT PERSON:

In the event that the Official Contact Person is not available, the Alternate Official Contact Person will be contacted to answer questions or to convey a message to the Official Contact Person. Please designate a person who will be available during regular business hours.

5. RELEASE AND ETHICS STATEMENTS:

- a. **Release Statement.** Please read this section carefully.
- b. **Ethics Statement and Signature of the Highest-Ranking Official.** The applicant's highest-ranking official must sign in the space provided, indicating that the applicant agrees to the terms and conditions stated in the Release Statement. In addition, the highest-ranking official's signature attests to the Ethics Statement made. Type below the signature the person's name and title, the applicant's name, and the highest-ranking official's address, telephone number, and fax number, as indicated.

6. APPLICATION SUBMISSION:

In keeping with our Green philosophy, electronic submission (PDF format) is preferred. If electronic submission is not possible, note whether application is submitted on CD (3 copies), or printed (3 bound copies).



7. APPLICATION FEES

Application fees must be submitted at the time that the application form is submitted. Fee structure is listed on Page 23 of this document, and the payment submission form is on page 28.

8. SIZE AND LOCATION OF APPLICANT:

- a. Provide the total number of workforce employees as of January 1, 2011. A minimum of 2 people is required.
- b. Check the appropriate financial descriptor (sales, revenues, or budgets) and the appropriate range for the preceding fiscal year.
- c. Indicate the number of the applicant organization's sites. Offices or other work areas located near each other need not be counted as separate sites if they are considered to be one location for business and personnel purposes.
- d. State the approximate percentage (to the nearest whole number) of the applicant's employees who are located in and outside of the United States or its territories.
- e. State the approximate percentage (to the nearest whole number) of the applicant's physical assets located in and outside the United States or its territories.
- f. Check the appropriate response.
- g. Check the appropriate response.
- h. Attach a line and box organization chart for the applicant. In each box, include the name of the unit or division and also its leader.

9. SUB-UNITS / PARENT ORGANIZATION:

Provide the name and address of the sub units or parent organization (the highest level of an organization). If the applicant is a sub-unit, briefly describe the major functions provided to the applicant by the parent or by other subunits of the parent. Provide the name and title of the highest-ranking official of the parent, in order to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest for any of the assessors.



Application Form

1. APPLICANT

Company Name

Address

City

State

Zip

2. CERTIFICATION CATEGORY (check one)

- International Corporation (with multiple sites and more than 5,000 employees)
- Large Organization (over 1,000 employees and/or multiple sites)
- Mid-size Organization (500 - 1,000 employees and single site)
- Small Organization (10 - 500 employees and single site)
- Non-Profit Organization
- K-12 Education
- Higher Education (University, College, Vocational, Community College)
- Government or Public Sector Agency
- Health Care or Medical Facility

3. OFFICIAL CONTACT PERSON

Name

Title

Address (overnight mailing address, not PO Box)

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Fax

Email

4. ALTERNATE OFFICIAL CONTACT PERSON

Name

Title

Telephone

Fax

Email



5. RELEASE AND ETHICS STATEMENTS BY HIGHEST RANKING OFFICIAL

a. Release Statement

We understand that this application will be reviewed by members of ACC's Board of Assessors. Should our organization be selected for a site visit, we agree to host the site visit and to facilitate an open and unbiased examination of our organization's responses to the Criteria. We understand that our organization must pay reasonable costs associated with a site visit. If our organization is selected to receive Certification, we agree to share non-proprietary information on our successful environmental stewardship strategies with other organizations as requested. I understand that ACC Assessors, Judges, and staff are authorized to use cell phones, and cordless phones to discuss this application. Assessors are also allowed to transfer information via e-mail, fax, and hard mail while following stringent confidentiality procedures.

b. Ethics Statement and Signature of the Highest-Ranking Official

I state and attest that:

1. I have reviewed the information provided by my organization in this Application Package.
2. To the best of my knowledge no untrue statement of a material fact is contained in this Application Package, and no omission of a material fact that I am legally permitted to disclose and that affects my organization's ethical and legal practices has been made. This includes but is not limited to sanctions and ethical breaches.

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____ Title _____

Address (overnight mailing address, not PO Box) _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

6. APPLICATION COPIES:

Please note the type of submission: E-mail CD (3 copies) Print (3 bound copies)

7. SIZE AND LOCATION OF APPLICANT

a. Total number of employees: _____ - Within U.S./Territories: _____ - Outside the U.S. _____

b. Number of sites: _____ - Within U.S./Territories: _____ - Outside the U.S. _____

c. In the event the applicant receives Green CSM Self-Certification, can the applicant make available sufficient personnel and documentation to share its best practices at an ACC Conference? _____ Yes _____ No

d. Attach a line and/or box organization chart for the applicant. In each box, include the name of the unit or division, and its head.

8. SUB-UNITS / PARENT ORGANIZATION

a. Is the applicant a sub-unit or a parent organization? (*Check all that apply*)

Yes No

If yes, is the applicant:

- a subsidiary of a unit of owned by controlled by
 a division of administered by a school of

b. Parent organization (*“Parent” means the highest organizational level*)

Name

Address

City State Zip

Highest Ranking Official of Parent Organization

Name

Title

c. Size of the worldwide workforce of the parent: _____ employees.

d. Is the applicant the only sub-unit of the parent organization intending to apply? (*check one*)

Yes No Don't Know

9. APPLICATION FEES:

Please complete the payment submission form, and mail to ACC's Certification Administrator at:

American Consumer Council
Green  SM Certification Program
Post Office Box 503016
San Diego, CA 92150-3016

Application Content and Format Requirements

Confidentiality of Content: All information contained in your application for the Green CSM Self-Certification is treated confidentially and will not be shared, viewed, or released by anyone associated with the American Consumer Council. Only the Certification Administrator and Green CSM Assessor Team members who are assigned to assess your application will read your application.

Conflicts of Interest: Each assessor agrees to disclose any direct or perceived conflict-of-interest with any assigned application and be removed from any involvement in such application.

Application Content:

All Green CSM Self-Certification applications must contain the following in the order listed below:

- Tab 1 should include:
 - Completed “Green CSM Self-Certification” Application for **Self-Certification** Applicant’s organization name, address, email. Logos and slogans are permissible.
 - Point-of-contact name, address, email.
- Tab 2 should include:
 - Organizational Chart
 - Glossary of Terms and Acronyms
- Tab 3 **limited to 12 pages** should include:
 - Section 1. Organization Profile
 - Section 2. Organizational Challenges
 - Section 3. Environmental and CSR Processes and Results (Categories 1-5).

Notes:

- Charts and Graphs are acceptable; however, they will be counted as part of your 12-page limit, and must be in a legible font size. *The exception is your Organizational Chart that explains your organization’s structure and reporting hierarchy.*
- A “Glossary of Terms” relevant to your organization or industry is encouraged and does not count towards the 12-page limit.

Application Format: Page Limits, Type Size, Paper, Lines Spacing, Margins, and Exclusions

To help ensure the equal treatment of all applicants, application reports must meet the page limit, type size, and format requirements indicated below, whether submitted on paper copies or in CD/PDF format. If requirements are not met, your application may be returned or section(s) of your application may be omitted.

1. In your Certification Application, the Responses Addressing All Criteria *Items* are limited to the equivalent of 12 single-sided pages, which must include all pictures, graphs, figures, tables, and appendices. The responses must contain the same **Category** and **Item** numerical designations as the Green CSM Self-Certification Criteria herein.
2. Assessors must base their evaluations solely on information contained within the application report. Do not add links to information or Web sites. Assessors are instructed to rely solely on the content in the application and are not allowed to follow any such links.
3. Paper size: standard 8-1/2 x 11 inches. PDFs should be formatted for this size.



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4. Text format: Use “Times New Roman” 12-point font or the equivalent. A larger font size is acceptable. Captions to graphs and photos may use a smaller font but nothing less than 10 Times New Roman.
5. Line spacing: Use an equivalent of two points of lead between lines. Note: One point of lead equals 1/72, or 0.0138 inch.
6. Page numbers on each page are required and should start with Page 1, 2, 3, etc.
7. Margins should be at least 1/2 inch (at least 3/4 inch on the side of the page that is bound or fastened if a hard copy is submitted). The number of lines per page must not exceed 60, including the page headings. A blank line separating paragraphs is counted as a line. Page numbers do not count as a line.
8. While electronic applications are encouraged and preferred, if Applicant chooses to submit a hard copy, please provide three (3) bound or fastened copies. Copies should be mailed to ACC's Post Office address at: Post Office Box 503016, San Diego, CA 92150-3016 USA. Electronic applications should be sent to ACC's Certification Director at: jean@americanconsumercouncil.org
9. Questions: Please call ACC at 1-800-544-0414 during regular business hours (8am - 5pm - Pacific Standard Time). ACC's local telephone number in USA: 1-760-787-0414.

Note: Type used in picture captions, graphs, figures, data tables, and appendices also must meet the requirements for type size and line spacing (no font-size less than 10 Times New Roman). If the table or graph is reduced from its original size for inclusion, applicants must use larger type sizes in preparing the original so that the reduced material in the application report meets the type size requirements. Type style and/or size need not be uniform throughout the application report so long as all styles and sizes meet the basic requirements defined above.



Fee Structure

Application Fees

The chart below shows the 2011 application fees for the various types of Applicants.

- The appropriate full fee must be submitted to ACC with your Application Package.

Applicant Sector	Fee
International Corporation (over 5,000 employees)	\$ 1,500
Large organization (over 1,000 employees or multiple sites)	\$1,200
Mid-size organization (500-1,000 employees)	\$750
Small organization (2-500 employees)	\$350
Non-Profit (credit union, church, foundation, etc.)	\$350
Higher Education/Vocational/Community Colleges	\$350
Government, Military Sites and Education	\$350
Healthcare (Hospitals, Physicians Offices, Medical Clinics)	\$350
<i>Optional Written Feedback Report from Green CSM Assessors</i>	\$500

Submission Requirements

Submission Requirements

A. Applicants must submit an Application Package containing no more than 25 pages (plus Intent to Apply Form, Glossary of Terms, and Organizational Chart – these pages do not count toward the 25-page limit).

B. Application Copies:

1. Electronic submissions of applications are encouraged and preferred. Applications sent by e-mail should be sent to ACC’s Certification Director at: jean@americanconsumercouncil.org
2. Applications may also be submitted by CD, using the instructions below.
3. If Applicant chooses to submit a hard copy, please provide five (5) bound or fastened copies. Copies should be mailed to ACC’s Post Office address at: Post Office Box 503016, San Diego, CA 92150-3016.

C. Payment of the **Green CSM** Self-Certification Application fee must be received concurrent with the application (U.S. Mail is acceptable for fee payment). Please indicate on the Payment Form your method of payment (check, money order, wire transfer, Visa, MasterCard, or American Express). If paying by check or money order, make it payable to the “American Consumer Council” and mail to:

American Consumer Council
Attn: **Green CSM Self-Certification Program**
Post Office Box 503016
San Diego, CA 92150-3016

Requirements for Submitting CD Copy:

1. Please use a CD-R not CD-RW.
2. The application report must be a single, complete PDF file, not multiple PDF Files on the CD.
3. Include the application forms and Glossary of Terms as requested.
4. Select the “embed fonts” option when creating the PDF file.
5. Insert page breaks and labeled divider pages between sections in the electronic file, if desired.
6. Proof your PDF file to ensure that it does not reflow onto extra pages and that all information, charts, graphs, etc. are appropriately retained.
7. When preparing the CD, please organize the disk so that it can be read from a standard CD-ROM drive.
8. Verify the content and number of pages, and verify that it prints properly (as the image on the screen is sometimes not what appears in print).
9. Please label the disk with the name of the applicant and “**Green CSM Self Certification** Application, and the Month/Day/Year”



Frequently Asked Questions

Who may participate for the Green **C**SM Self-Certification?

Organizations that may apply include privately and publicly owned organizations that employ two (2) or more full-time employees, located or doing business in the United States and its Territories; public, private, government, and education organizations that provide education services to students; and public, private, and government health care organizations that do business in the U.S., and are primarily engaged in providing medical, surgical, or other health care services directly to people. Sub-units of organizations may apply. Both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations are eligible.

What is the basis for the Green **C**SM Self-Certification Criteria?

Criteria are developed annually from the state-of-the-art learning of private- and public-sector organizations that are working to achieve Sustainability, Environmental Stewardship, and Corporate Social Responsibility. The Criteria reflect validated, leading-edge practices for achieving environmental compliance and are aligned with the Baldrige National Quality Award Program Criteria for Performance Excellence, United Nations environmental practices, and environmental standards of the EPA.

How is Self-Certification eligibility determined?

This is *not* a competitive process, nor is there a limit as to the number of Self-Certification Recipients. The Green **C**SM Self-Certification program applications are reviewed by certified members of its Board of Assessors, who review each application, and determine if the information provided is responsive to the multiple requirements of the Green **C**SM Self-Certification Criteria.

No Site visits are required for Green **C**SM Self-Certification applicants.

What does an organization receive if it is certified?

Each self-certified recipient receives the Green **C**SM Self-Certification certificate bearing the Green **C**SM Self-Certification logo, the name of the applicant, date received, **Self-Certification** designation inscribed. All certified recipients may publicize and advertise their self-certification designation.

Is the identity of applicants and the information submitted made available to the public?

The identity of all applicants remains confidential until an applicant is approved as a recipient of the Green **C**SM Self-Certification. All information submitted by applicants is treated as *confidential*.

All ACC staff and Assessors are required to follow stringent confidential procedures when handling applicant information. However, they are allowed to transfer information to team members via e-mail, regular mail, fax, and telephone, when confidentiality procedures are followed.

What is expected of Green **C**SM Self-Certification recipients?

Certified recipients are requested to share information about their exceptional performance practices with other organizations. However, recipients are not required to share proprietary information even if such information was part of their certification application. The principal mechanisms for sharing information are ACC conferences, workshops, and internet communications.

When can organizations apply?

ACC's Certification Program operates on a year-round cycle. While there is no application deadline, ACC does ask applicants to complete the "Intent to Apply Form" and send it to ACC at least ten days prior to submitting their Green **C**SM Self-Certification Application. This helps ACC anticipate your application and alert our assessors in the event a review is necessary.



How do organizations apply?

The application process consists of submitting the Intent to Apply Form, and Green CSM Self-Certification Application which fully addresses the Green CTM Criteria questions. The application must summarize the organization's processes and results in response to all Items of the Criteria, and comply with the application instructions and forms contained in this document.

Self-Certification and Re-certification Status:

Self-Certification applicants enjoy a *one-year status* as "Self-Certified" by ACC. Prior to your one-year term ending, all applicants are required to be re-certified by re-applying using the most current Green CSM Self-Certification criteria available. All applicants are encouraged to apply for the Green CSM Certification.

Who is involved with ACC's Green CSM Self-Certification Program?

The Consumer Green Council, an Advisory Board to the American Consumer Council, is responsible for the successful administration of this program and updating the certification criteria each year. The Council is comprised of dedicated volunteer members who develop policies, procedures, and program documents; recruit Applicants; and oversee the application review process and Assessor process.

About the American Consumer Council:

ACC was founded in 1987 as a non-profit organization and is solely responsible for the administration of the Green CSM Self-Certification program, including: fee processing, coordination of recognition and certification of applicants as appropriate, and providing staff support to the Consumer Green Council. ACC currently has more than 90,000 members in 38 states and U.S. Territories.

Board of Assessors:

The Board of Assessors consists of professional assessors who evaluate certification applications and prepare feedback reports for the applicants. Each application is assigned to a Green Certification Assessor Team that evaluates the application, conducts the site visit (for full Green CSM Certification) as appropriate, and prepares the feedback report (upon request for Green CSM Self-Certification). The board consists of leading experts from business, health care, education, government, and nonprofit organizations. ACC has retained Quiet Excellence, LLC to coordinate assessor duties and perform all reviews of applications independent of ACC and its staff.

ACC Board of Directors:

The ACC Board of Directors oversees all activities and programs of the non-profit corporation and its staff administration. The board consists of distinguished volunteers and recognized consumers, and leaders representing business, education, government, healthcare, and other sectors of our nation's economy.



Additional Questions:

If you have questions, please email or contact:

Jean Greer

Green CSM Certification Administrator

Post Office Box 503016

San Diego, CA 92150-3016 USA

jean@americanconsumercouncil.org

1-760-787-0414 (Office)

1-760-788-2024 (Fax)

You may also find answers to your questions on our website:

www.americanconsumercouncil.org

Application Package:

Applicants are asked to submit their electronic package or CD to:

jean@americanconsumercouncil.org

Applications can also be mailed to:

American Consumer Council

Green CSM Self-Certification Program

Post Office Box 503016

San Diego, CA 92150-3016

1-760-787-0414 - Direct

1-760-788-2024 - Fax



