Water Quality Association

THE GOLD STANDARD



Your Guide to WQA's Gold Seal Product Certification Program

INTRODUCTION

The Water Quality Association's Gold Seal Product Certification Program is the oldest third-party testing and certification program in the water treatment industry. The easily recognized Gold Seal lets consumers know right up front that products have been independently tested to industry standards for safety and efficacy.

The WQA Gold Seal is awarded only after rigorous laboratory tests, literature review, and material assessments and is widely considered a mark of excellence across a substantial range of water treatment products around the world.

In the following pages, you'll learn about WQA, what the Gold Seal Certification represents, the application process for certification, and why our Gold Seal is widely considered the gold standard for safeguarding our drinking water.

ABOUT WQA'S GOLD SEAL PRODUCT CERTIFICATION

The WQA Gold Seal Certification Program independently tests and certifies that drinking water treatment units, drinking water system components, and other products meet established NSF/ANSI and NSF/ANSI/CAN standards.

Our Gold Seal Certification ensures:

- The product is constructed or formulated with safe materials
- The product will not leach harmful contaminants into the drinking water
- The product will perform as promised under normal usage
- The product will maintain its indicated life expectancy under normal usage
- All associated test data, claims, and literature are verified and reproducible

The Gold Seal isn't just a badge. It is a global symbol of quality, safety, and certified performance.

WHY GET CERTIFIED?

A certified product bearing our distinguished mark delivers much more than peace of mind for consumers.

It indicates that the product has passed rigorous industry-standard testing conducted by an independent and reputable third party. It also states that the product's parent company is monitored annually, and that their manufacturing process remains consistent, reproducible, and in line with recognized industry standards.

The WQA Gold Seal endorsement can represent many things for consumers, including:

BUYING POWER

The Gold Seal demonstrates a clear and powerful endorsement for consumers that the product is proven to perform the way the packaging indicates.

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Certified products allow consumers to target specific contaminant issues with confidence, knowing that the product is proven to abide by the claims it states.



QUALITY ENDORSEMENT

Every WQA certification signifies a high-quality product consumers can trust.

MONITORING & CONSISTENCY

Certifications do not remain in place indefinitely. WQA's annual inspections verify that each manufacturing process is consistent and meets the most up-to-date standards of testing and evaluation.



REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

States or local cities often have specific regulations that require certification for the ability to sell legally in their area.

WQA tests and certifies drinking water components to NSF/ANSI/CAN 61, governing health effects, and NSF/ANSI/CAN 372, governing lead content.

California passed legislation requiring an ANAB-accredited certifier to certify products making any health claims before they can be legally sold in California. If a product is certified by WQA, consumers can be sure the product is safe for purchase in California.

PRODUCT CERTIFICATION AREAS

WQA provides various types of certifications to encompass a wide variety of products. In short, anything that comes into contact with household water, particularly drinking water, may be a candidate for certification.

We divide certifications into **five categories** that cover various aspects of water treatment technology.

1 DRINKING WATER TREATMENT UNITS

Full systems that use filter, reverse osmosis, water softener, or ultraviolet light technologies

2 DRINKING WATER SYSTEM COMPONENTS

Individual components or parts of water treatment systems

3 DRINKING WATER TREATMENT CHEMICALS

Any chemicals added to drinking water for health or aesthetic effects

4 SUSTAINABLE DRINKING WATER TREATMENT PRODUCTS

Recognizes improvements in sustainability of production and processes

5 LOW LEAD COMPLIANCE

Products demonstrating compliance to the EPA's rule stating that no component in contact with drinking water may contain more than 0.25% lead content

To find out more about specific certification areas or certification standards, please visit **wqa.org/product-cert** or write us at **goldseal@wqa.org**.

WQA'S SUSTAINABILITY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The first-of-its-kind environmental labeling program for the water treatment industry, this certification mark verifies to retailers and consumers that a product has been manufactured according to industry standards for recognized best practices in environmental sustainability and corporate social responsibility.

The **WQA Sustainability Certification Program** is the only environmental certification program in the world to earn ANAB accreditation to ISO 17065 and ISO 14024 for Type I Environmental Labeling. The sustainability certification provides independent, third-party verification that a product is environmentally responsible in all phases of its life cycle: from raw material extraction and production to distribution, use phase, and end-of-life disposal.

WHY WQA?

Many U.S. and Canadian codes and regulations require products to meet NSF standards or, more accurately, the ANAB-accredited and public domain NSF/ANSI standards. People then often mistakenly believe that products must have "NSF certification." This is not correct. It is important to understand the distinction between standards and certification.

WQA, like other testing and certification agencies, is accredited by ANAB and SCC for the scopes as indicated: **ANAB Accreditation** and **SCC Accreditation**. The WQA Gold Seal Program tests and certifies drinking water treatment units, drinking water system components, and other products to NSF/ANSI and NSF/ANSI/CAN standards, as well as other standards.

Because WQA focuses on water treatment certifications, we offer the industry's quickest, most efficient path to certification. Experience "Less Stress, More Success" by certifying with WQA.

WQA'S GOLD SEAL PRODUCT CERTIFICATION

For water treatment product manufacturers, WQA's **Gold Seal** provides a clear, efficient, and quick path to certification.

- **Ethics and integrity guide everything we do**
- **Attentive to customer needs and feedback**
- **Consistent and dependable timelines**
- **Certification expertise you can trust**
- **Strong value and competitive pricing**
- **Support for water treatment industry**

THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The certification process is an in-depth and extensive inquiry into sourcing, manufacturing, and testing.

INITIAL INQUIRY

To start your product certification through the **Gold Seal Certification Program**, contact WQA at **630-929-2593** or **goldseal@wqa.org**.

You will be asked a series of questions to provide WQA the information needed for an accurate cost estimate for certification. Be prepared to share specific contaminant reduction claims, flow rates, capacities, and general product specifications for your system.

A representative from our Business Development division can answer any questions you have.

SUBMIT APPLICATION

Upon receiving a cost estimate, applicants fill out a Certification Agreement as well as a Product Information Form (PIF). The PIF records the vetted product parts list to be included in the appropriate certification.

Once WQA receives your application forms, you will be assigned a WQA account representative to assist with the remaining steps.

PRODUCT EVALUATION

WQA owns and operates a state-of-the-art product testing laboratory where most client products undergo rigorous testing to ensure compliance with the appropriate category standard.

WQA does allow applicants to use alternative laboratories, known as technical service providers (TSPs), for testing. Test data received from WQA-approved TSPs is considered equal to data produced by the WQA laboratory.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The product's installation manual, performance data sheet, and data label will be evaluated for specific requirements set forth by standard guidelines.



FACILITY AUDIT

Audits help maintain consistent communication throughout the certification period and, upon certification, are conducted on an annual basis.

Facility audits evaluate your production facilities to ensure products being marketed are the same products that were tested and certified.

WQA also reviews your quality process to ensure the Gold Seal is properly applied to certified products only.



TIPS TO HELP PASS PRODUCT TESTING

- Become familiar with the criteria in the category
- Design your product(s) to meet those criteria
- Aim above the minimum criteria, since standards can often change
- Conduct internal testing to understand how your product will perform



CERTIFICATION DECISION

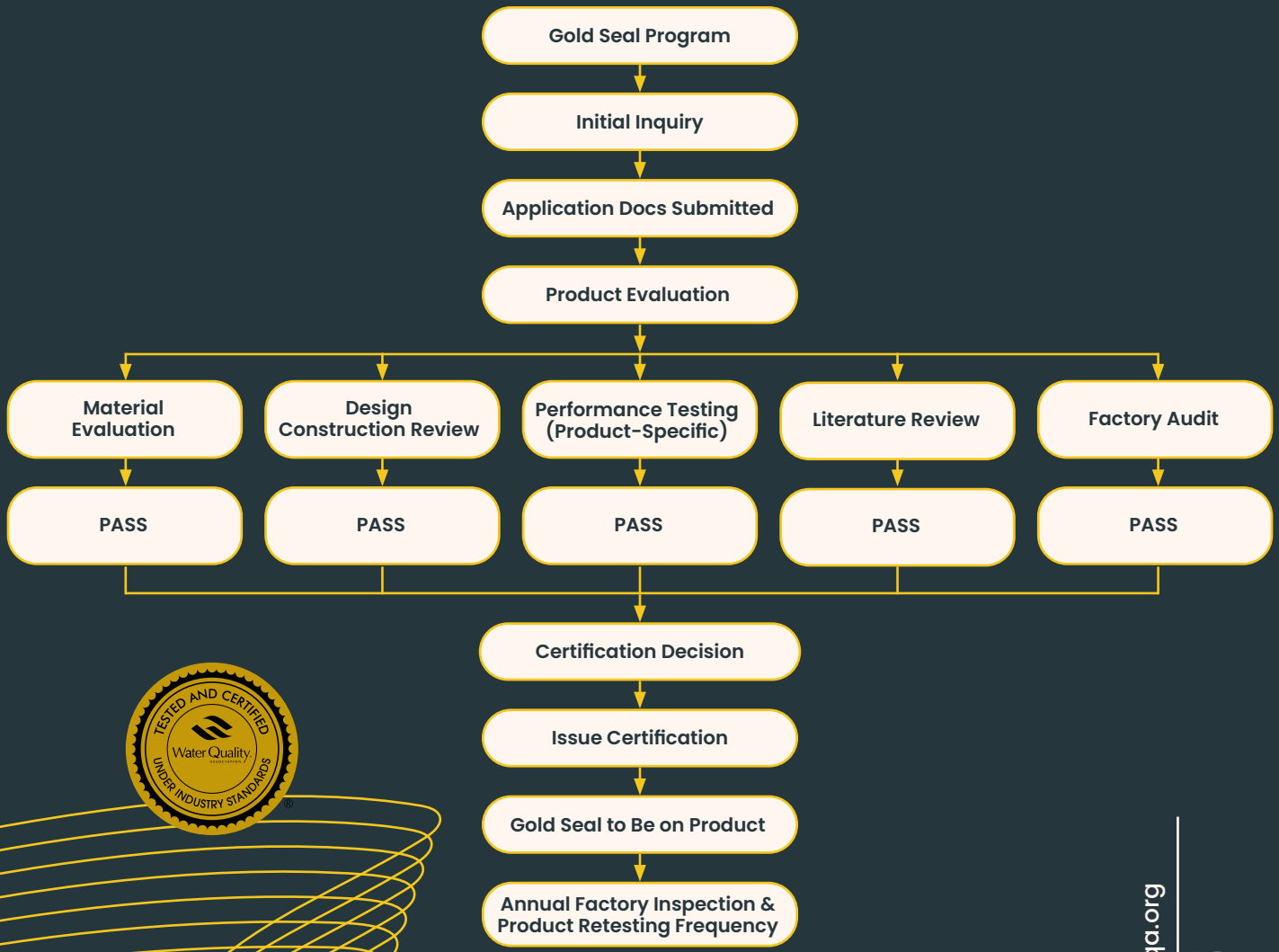
Once the review is completed, applications are submitted for decision. If all category requirements are met, certificates and test data are issued.

Upon certification, a product may bear the WQA Gold Seal. The usage standards for bearing the mark are outlined in the Gold Seal Logo Policy on our website.

To start your initial inquiry into certifying your product through the **Gold Seal Product Certification Program**, contact WQA at **630-929-2593**.

Confirmation of certification can be found on the WQA website at **wqa.org/find-products**.

GOLD SEAL CERTIFICATION PROCESS



ABOUT WQA

The Water Quality Association is a not-for-profit association advocating for the betterment of water quality in the residential, commercial, and light industrial water treatment industries through solution-focused simplicity, transparency, and uncompromising credibility.

WQA represents more than 2,500 member companies around the globe, but our impact extends beyond that role. WQA is a resource, an educator of professionals, a laboratory for product testing, and the leading voice of the water treatment and purification industry.

Water Quality® ASSOCIATION



WQA PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

The **WQA Professional Certification Program** helps consumers and employers identify individuals in the point-of-use/point-of-entry water quality improvement industry who have achieved a level of professional expertise and high professional standards. If you're a water treatment professional, WQA Professional Certification is a must.

Learn how to get certified at **wqa.org/professional-certification**.



WQA MEMBERSHIP

If you're not a member, please visit **wqa.org/membership** to learn about the benefits of joining WQA. If you're ready to join or renew your membership, contact us at **membership@wqa.org**.

ABOUT THE WQA GOLD SEAL

Finding quality products in a marketplace flooded with options can be challenging. How can you tell if a product is safe, reliable, durable, and capable of meeting the claims made on its packaging and literature?

The **WQA Gold Seal** is awarded only after rigorous laboratory tests, literature review, and material assessments and is widely considered a mark of excellence across a substantial range of products around the world. It is a globally recognized symbol of quality, safety, and reliability.

Learn more about our certification process at **wqa.org/product-cert**.

To start your certification process, call us at **630-929-2593** or email us at **goldseal@wqa.org**.

For a complete listing of all products that have earned our seal, visit our website at **wqa.org/find-products**.

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