

Frequently Asked Questions

NSF/ANSI Standard 61

Drinking Water System Components - Health Effects

What is NSF/ANSI Standard 61?

If you manufacture, sell or distribute products involved in drinking water treatment or distribution in North America, your products are required to comply with a certain standard of safety.

NSF/ANSI Standard 61: Drinking Water System Components - Health Effects, originally written by the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF), was first published in 1988 to provide a uniform standard for material compliance. Following development led by NSF, AWWA, AWWARF, U.S. EPA, ASDWA, and Health Canada, the standard is annually revised by a balanced joint committee comprised of U.S. and Canadian regulators, water utility representatives and other users/product manufacturers.

How does Standard 61 measure the "safety" of products used in water systems?

Standard 61 establishes product categories (e.g. pipes, protective/barrier materials, joining and sealing materials, etc.) and tailors a specific battery of testing with regard to these categories. Overall, the criteria establishes thresholds, or minimum health effect requirements, for the chemical contaminants and impurities that are directly imparted to drinking water from products, components, and materials used in drinking water systems.

Does Five Star Products manufacture a "NSF/ANSI Standard 61" certified product?

YES. Five Star[®] Fluid Grout 161. In the case of Five Star Products, NSF/ANSI Standard 61 certification was gained for a specific product, Five Star[®] Fluid Grout 161, through a certifying body named UL. UL is an accredited laboratory for NSF/ANSI Standard 61.

However, it is important to understand that any certifying body (such as NSF) can write a standard for manufacturers to certify their products to; but these standards are overseen by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). Therefore, while NSF may have originally authored Standard 61, any certifying body that is accredited by ANSI for Standard 61 is able to certify a manufacturer's material to the standard.

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What does this mean for Five Star Products?

Our Fluid Grout 161 has been certified safe to use for any application that comes into contact with potable water!







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How does the certification process work?

A manufacturer first submits an application to a certifying body, intending to gain certification to a specific standard (e.g. NSF/ ANSI Standard 61). After receipt of the application and initial review by the certifying body, the manufacturer also submits formulation, toxicology and product use information. The certifying body begins a formulation review which involves toxicology testing of the water-contacting material, to determine any possible ingredients, contaminants, or reactions that may leach from the material into drinking water. This review determines the battery of chemical analyses to follow.

The manufacturer is then the subject of an audit by the certifying body to inspect production facilities and verify accuracy and consistency of formulation, raw materials and quality control procedures. Following the production facility audit, laboratory testing commences according to exposure and analysis methods specific to product categories. These tests essentially consist of exposing the product to various formulated waters designed to extract specific types of contaminants. Contaminant concentrations are determined from chemical analyses of the exposure water samples.

Pending a final toxicology evaluation based on "pass/fail" criteria, products that meet the requirements of the standard are then certified by the certifying body. Once certification is granted, an annual review by the certifying body is performed and the manufacturer's production facilities are subject to unannounced annual inspections.

Is certification to Standard 61 required for drinking water system product applications in every U.S. state?

No, but forty-nine states have legislation, regulations or policies requiring drinking water system components to comply with or be certified to NSF/ANSI Standard 61: *Drinking Water System Components - Health Effects*. Drinking water system components fall into two categories of regulation. The first is centralized water treatment plants and water distribution systems up to and including the water meter which are typically regulated by state drinking water agencies. The second is water distribution systems downstream of the water meter or inside a building which are typically regulated by state or local plumbing codes.



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