



Green Dot – Code of Practice

Introduction

The Green Dot is a widely recognised symbol in many European Countries. It signifies that for each piece of packaging, a financial contribution has been paid to a national packaging recovery organisation. The Green Dot is a mandatory trade mark in some countries, which means that the first person to place packaging onto the market must pay a licence fee to use the Green Dot in that country and ensure that the Green Dot is printed on their packaging.

This code of practice document is designed to help businesses make a choice about whether and how to apply the Green Dot trademark in the UK and to inform best practice to minimise potential consumer confusion.

The Green Dot in the UK

The Green Dot is a registered and protected trademark in the UK but has no other specific meaning for UK consumers.

The UK does not operate a National Green Dot recovery system for packaging, but producers are still expected to pay towards the recycling of the packaging they place on the market through other means. As such, the Green Dot should not be associated with recycling by UK consumers and any company found to be making or encouraging such a link will be in breach of their User Terms and Conditions and The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations.

In order to ensure that the Green Dot is not misused and does not mislead UK consumers, a licence can only be issued to companies in the UK if they are exporting packaging/packed goods to Europe. Valpak holds the licence for the Green Dot in the UK.

Advice to new users

We suggest that potential new users of a Green Dot licence consider their motivation for wanting to apply the trademark to their packaging.

We would suggest that it should only be for one of the following reasons:

- The same packaging is also used for another market elsewhere in Europe where a Green Dot system for recycling is in operation and you (or your customer) have paid into that system and would like to apply the mark to demonstrate this
- As a multinational brand owner, it saves expensive and administration to have the same packaging design (including labels) applied to all packaging regardless of destination or language

For information on printing specifications, please see the Standards of Use Policy.



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Advice to existing users

All Green Dot users should provide up-to-date information regarding the type of packaging and brands that are to be licenced for use in the UK. This packaging becomes 'Authorised' as referred to under the User Terms. It is the licence holder's responsibility to inform us of any change to their Authorised Packaging i.e. new brand acquisition or sales.

Proper and Legal Use of the Green Dot in the UK

Valpak Limited takes an active role in finding and contacting companies displaying the mark without a licence or using the Green Dot in a manner not consistent with this Code of Practice.

Misrepresenting the mark will be considered an infringement of the User Terms and could result in your licence being revoked if immediate action is not taken to rectify the situation. For example, placing the Dot directly next to information on recycling or modifying the symbol to include a recycling message will be considered misrepresentation.

Furthermore, deliberately misleading consumers through the application of the Dot as a recycling symbol could result in the consumer making a transactional decision that they would not have otherwise taken. In such a case, Trading Standards can decide to take enforcement action under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.

Advice on promoting a recycling message

We seek to encourage packaging producers and brand owners to provide adequate advice to their customers on recycling.

The Green Dot should not be applied to bolster an environmental claim. When looking for a suitable logo to promote environmental credentials there are a variety which can be applied. We attach these in Appendix I. For general recycling encouragement or to make a claim about the recycled content of the packaging, then the most common symbol is the Mobius loop.

We would recommend pointing customers to general all-purpose websites on recycling rather than applying symbols to packaging, such as www.recycle-more.co.uk which also has a comprehensive bank locator function to allow consumers to find their nearest recycling facility for all types of packaging.

Contact us

For more information on the Green Dot please call **03450 682 572** or email info@valpak.co.uk



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Appendix I

Environmental claims should be truthful, transparent in meaning and able to be substantiated by the company making the claim. When considering making a claim, be clear about the material of the packaging it refers to and explicit about the meaning of any symbol associated with that claim. Some symbols are listed here:



The Mobius Loop

This symbol infers that packaging is capable of being recycled. The recycled content of the packaging can also be displayed as a percentage in the centre of the loop



The Tidyman

This is a straightforward message to the consumer to dispose of items thoughtfully and not to litter. It is the uniform symbol for the 'Keep Britain Tidy' campaign



Glass Recycling

This symbol enables consumers to identify the material and they are encouraged to recycle it



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Aluminium Recycling

This symbol enables consumers to identify the material and they are encouraged to recycle it



Plastic Recycling

These symbols are marked 1-7 and can be used to identify the different types of plastic packaging



Steel Recycling

This symbol identifies the packaging material as steel and encourages consumers to recycle it



The Compostable Logo

This symbol signifies that the packaging has been tested and is suitable for putting into local authority compost collections where they are available



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The Home Compostable Logo

This symbol was launched to demonstrate that packaging can be placed in home composting bins



The National Association of Paper Merchants mark

This symbol can be placed on paper or board made from a minimum of 75% waste paper or board



The European Eco-label

This symbol has been developed by the European Union. The symbol is awarded to products that meet a set of strict environmental performance criteria, which take into account all aspects of the product's life including the packaging