



Product Description

Metal-based, non-powered handheld tools for lawn and garden tasks. Includes, but is not limited to, shovels, clippers, trowels, rakes, and axes. Does not include power tools, ladders, dollies, hand trucks, wheelbarrows, or carts.

Mission

The mission of The Sustainability Consortium (TSC) is to improve the sustainability of products when they are made, purchased, and used, with a focus on manufacturers and the retail buyers who decide what products to carry in stores. The information in this document is drawn from our detailed research on known and potential social and environmental impacts across product life cycles. TSC acknowledges that other issues exist, but we have included here those that are most relevant to the decision making of retail buying teams and manufacturers. The topics are listed alphabetically for ease of reading; the order does not represent prioritization or other criteria.



Consumers

Product Efficiency

Operating powered hand tools after they are purchased requires a significant amount of electricity. Manufacturers should design powered hand tools to be energy-efficient in power charging and operation.



Managing the Supply Chain

Sustainable Mining

Mining operations can pollute the air and water, diminish natural resources, and jeopardize community and worker rights, health, and safety. Manufacturers should source their raw materials from suppliers that benchmark the environmental and social sustainability practices of their mining operations against recognized standards.



Use of Resources

Climate and Energy

Manufacturing of hand tool products and their batteries consumes significant amounts of electricity and energy, leading to greenhouse gas emissions. Manufacturers should procure from suppliers that help abate these impacts by measuring, tracking, and reporting energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, with a focus on reduction. They should also perform preventative maintenance on equipment, replace inefficient equipment, use renewable energy sources, and encourage efficient energy behaviors throughout their operations.

Disposal and End-of-Life

Used batteries and battery chargers contain potentially dangerous materials, which should be collected and treated separately from other wastes, to avoid harm to humans or the environment. Manufacturers should participate in product stewardship programs to ensure that hand tools and batteries are responsibly managed and that materials are recycled whenever possible.

Material Efficiency

Production of metals depletes both energy and material resources, and improper disposal can represent a loss of otherwise reusable material and the potential release of pollutants. Manufacturers should minimize these impacts by designing products that optimize durability while using the least possible amount of material overall, as well as increasing material that is recyclable and comes from recycled sources.



Workers and Communities

Workers

Workers may be exposed to chemicals, dust, noise, or other industrial hazards. To help ensure worker health and safety, final product manufacturers should have a documented health and safety management plan, including a chemical management plan where needed, and provide safety training and personal protective equipment to workers. Manufacturers should procure materials from suppliers that address worker health and safety transparently and should perform audits when needed.