

# **Emission classification of building materials (M1 Classification): general instructions**

12 November 2014

These instructions describe the principles of the voluntary Finnish emission classification of building materials. Instructions have been approved by the Building Information Foundation RTS Committee Indoor Air Classification (PT17) at its meeting of 12 November 2014.

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

The emission classification of building materials is primarily designed for the classification of materials used in ordinary residential and work spaces. The classification activity is based on the criteria and principles established in the document Classification of Indoor Environment 2008, applicable at that time.

Emission classifications are granted by the Building Information Foundation RTS. Classification work is developed and supervised by Indoor Air Classification (PT 17) Committee appointed by the Director General of the Building Information Foundation RTS. Classification also promotes building methods aimed at good indoor climate in other ways. Classification applications and matters relating to classification decisions are handled by a separate classification working group elected by the Committee. The workgroup consists of a representative of the Finnish Society of Indoor Air Quality, a technical expert and the secretary of the classification workgroup.

## **2 APPLYING FOR EMISSION CLASSIFICATION**

Applications for an emission classification of a building material are submitted to the Building Information Foundation RTS on an application form drawn up for this purpose. Applicants should enclose with their application the product specification, instructions for use, the material safety data sheet and a research report. The research report must not be more than one (1) year old. The applicant may, if necessary, be asked to supply supplementary information.

## **3 THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE APPLICATION DOCUMENTS**

The Building Information Foundation RTS treats all documents and information submitted by applicants in support of their application in confidence. However, the name of the product and the holder of the classification will be released and entered in the directory of classifications referred to in Section 13.

## **4 RIGHT OF USE OF CLASSIFICATION LABEL**

Right of use of a classification label provides the company which has been granted classification the right to label the classified product with the label and to use the label for marketing purposes. The company must use the valid classification symbol, which is a registered trade mark.

## **5 VALIDITY OF RIGHT OF USE**

The period of validity of the right of use of a classification label is three (3) years. If the composition and method of manufacturing the product have not changed, the classification can be renewed for another three (3) years by application without testing provided that the required testing methods and the criteria set for the products have not been altered fundamentally. Both new and continuation applications will always be examined in accordance with the current requirements set for testing methods and the criteria set for the products.

## **6 OBLIGATION TO GIVE NOTICE OF CHANGES TO PRODUCT**

The holder of right of use is under an obligation to give the Building Information Foundation RTS prior notice of changes relating to the methods of manufacturing the product, its composition etc. if these changes affect the properties on the basis of which the classification was granted. The quality control of classified products is the responsibility of the person applying for classification. The material manufacturer is responsible for using an approved quality control system.

## **7 RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CLASSIFIED PRODUCT**

The owner of the classification is solely responsible for guaranteeing that the product fulfils the requirements concerning it. The Building Material Foundation RTS is not responsible for the classified products or for the product properties as reported by the owner of the classification.

## **8 NOTICE OF TERMINATION OR REVOCATION OF RIGHT OF USE OF CLASSIFICATION LABEL**

Both the Building Information Foundation RTS and the owner of the classification can give notice of terminating the classification and the right of use three (3) months from the notice. The Building Information Foundation RTS can revoke the classification and right of use without a period of notice in cases of abuse or if

it transpires that the requirements for granting classification are no longer met. If the Building Information Foundation RTS has reasonable grounds to suspect that the product no longer meets the requirements set for it, the owner of the classification must present new testing results showing that the requirements are met.

## 9 PRODUCT TESTING

### 9.1 Product testing before classification

Classification requires the product to be tested by an approved testing laboratory in accordance with the required methods.

### 9.2 Selection of testing laboratory

Sample selection, analysis and measurements of material emissions must be performed at a competent and impartial laboratory approved by the classification working group. A list of approved laboratories can be found on the Internet. The applicant shall be responsible for documentation.

### 9.3 Testing methods

Sampling, analysis and measurements of material emissions are to be conducted as stipulated in the following document:

- Emission Classification of Building Materials: Protocol for Chemical and Sensory Testing of Building Materials

The products are to be tested with regard to the following characteristics:

- total volatile organic compounds TVOC
- formaldehyde HCHO
- ammonia NH<sub>3</sub>
- carcinogens
- odours.

The research report must contain the details listed in the sample research report.

## 10 FEES

### 10.1 Classification fees

The applicant shall pay the Building Information Foundation RTS a fee for classification as well as any other fees due. The fees are confirmed by the Building Information Foundation RTS.

### 10.2 Testing fees and expenses

The applicant shall be responsible for all the expenses arising from the testing required for the application. The applicant shall pay the costs of testing directly to the testing institute.

## 11 USE OF CLASSIFICATION LABEL

### 11.1 Product labelling

Products, packaging, product specifications or instructions for use are to be labelled with the label of the emission class, M1, M2 or M3, granted to the product. Product specifications should also indicate restrictions relating to the use and application of the products in particular and any aspects which might give rise to an increase in emissions such as

- applications, suitability
- base requirements (humidity, temperature)
- preliminary treatments
- operational safety
- packaging
- transportation (packaging)
- storage (storage conditions, i.e., packed, wrapped in plastic etc.)
- instructions for use and installation
- cleaning instructions (pH requirements of detergent)
- environmental protection and waste management.

### 11.2 Product marketing

The classification label can be used for advertising and marketing the classified product alone. The classification label must not be used in marketing in such a way that it refers to the company as a whole or to products which have not been granted classification.

#### 12 THE APPEAL PROCEDURE

Applicants wishing to appeal a decision by the Building Information Foundation RTS concerning the right of use of a classification label or its refusal may submit an appeal in writing within 14 days of receipt of the decision to the Director General of the Building Information Foundation RTS, who will forward it to Committee Indoor Air Classification (PT 17) for adjudication.

#### 13 DIRECTORY OF CLASSIFIED PRODUCTS

The Building Information Foundation RTS maintains and publishes a directory of currently classified products and holders of right of use.

#### 14 SAMPLE TESTING OF CLASSIFIED PRODUCTS

The quality of classified products is verified through sample testing. The products to be tested are selected annually by lot by Committee Indoor Air Classification (PT 17).

The Building Information Foundation RTS pays both for the transport to the testing laboratory of the products selected for sample testing and for the testing itself. The test results are kept by the Building Information Foundation, but they are also notified to the holder of the classification. The results of the sample test are evaluated confidentially by the Building Information Foundation's three-member classification working group. If the sample test shows that the requirements set for the classification are not met, the holder of the classification may prove that the product complies with requirements by testing the product again at its own expense within three months. Otherwise the right to use the label will be cancelled.

#### 15 CHANGES TO GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The Building Information Foundation RTS's Committee Indoor Air Classification (PT 17) approved these instructions at its meeting on 12 November 2014. Committee Indoor Air Classification (PT 17) may alter these instructions if necessary.

#### REFERENCES

Classification of Indoor Environment 2008 (LVI 05-10440 en)