



Protect yourself from greenwashing:

- Research the company’s history and reputation
- Research “green” claims and seek out scientific evidence
- Report deceptive acts and practices in commerce to the Consumer Assistance Program (CAP).

Contact CAP



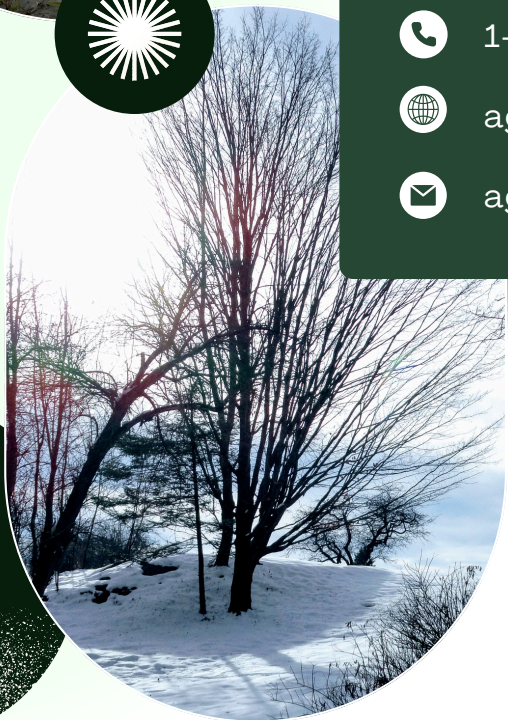
1-800-649-2424



ago.vermont.gov/cap



ago.cap@vermont.gov



Greenwashing Guidance

Greenwashing is a marketing, public relations, and sales strategy designed to make a company or product appear environmentally friendly, or “green,” when the claims being made have little or no meaningful impact on reducing environmental harms.



How does greenwashing impact you?

Greenwashing harms individual consumers as well as the broader marketplace.

Consumer Impact

As more consumers make purchases or seek services from companies that engage in unfair and deceptive practices such as greenwashing, more consumers are likely to be misled into making purchases they believe will benefit the environment.



Marketplace Impact

Companies that engage in such deception gain an unfair advantage in the marketplace over businesses that make honest and accurate claims about the environmental impact of their products or services, or that decline to make any such representations.



Are there rules against greenwashing?

Federal and state statutes, rules and guidance prohibit environmental (green) marketing and advertising claims that are unfair or deceptive to consumers.

- The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Green Guides prohibit “green” claims that deceive, mislead, or are unfair to consumers.
- Vermont’s Consumer Protection Act protects consumers from unfair or deceptive practices in commerce.

Why do companies greenwash?

01

Making “green” claims can increase sales by capitalizing on consumer concern for the environment.

02

Consumer purchasing decisions can involve feelings, values, and personal importance, such as climate change.

03

Companies seek to improve their brand identity and image as a company that is environmentally friendly.

Some “Green” claims to look for:

- Environmentally friendly
- 100% recyclable
- From natural sources
- From recycled material
- Burn cleaner
- Offset all carbon emissions
- Carbon neutral
- Create less pollution than competitors



1-800-649-2424



www.ago.vermont.gov