

Guide | Essential Requirements process

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Essential Requirements, working on a process

The essential requirements¹ specify that a company must implement a process that ensures, on a continual basis, that the packaging used is the most optimal for the product, with the least possible environmental impact.

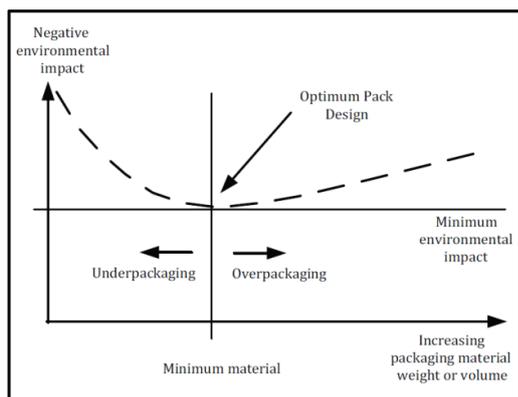


FIGURE 1 RLOV L., LOFGREN C., SORAS A. PACKAGING — A TOOL FOR THE PREVENTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT, PACKFORSK REPORT 194, STOCKHOLM 2000

What is optimum may vary for each product, see image. In respect of packaging for food products, it is known that loss of the packed product has a greater environmental impact than the use of packaging material². Damage to products during transportation may require the whole product to be manufactured again. Thus, too little as well as too much packaging material can influence the environmental impact. It is therefore necessary companies possess knowledge regarding packaging products and packaging materials.

Choices made in the development and optimization of packaging are often supported using information from the supplier or expert. The essential requirements oblige you to provide an insight into the choices made. To ensure the way in which you made certain choices is transparent for inspection by the Human Environment and Transport Inspectorate (Inspectie Leefomgeving en Transport, ILT), it is recommended that you create a file for each product-packaging combination. By creating these files now and updating them with the steps taken for every development or

optimization, the company starts meeting the essential requirements.

Advice

• Create a file that demonstrates the company's efforts to reduce the environmental impact of packaging and packaging waste in the Netherlands. For each product-packaging combination³, this file should state whether, during the development/most recent optimization, the company:

- determined whether the packaging is the most optimal for the product, considering the packaging requirements of the product and the consumer;
- determined the optimal recycling route for the packaging and whether this is available in the country for which the product is destined;
- determined whether it is possible to use as much recycled material as possible.

• Check whether the supplier(s) of the packaging materials and/or finished product comply with the essential requirements in the development of their packaging materials.

• Stipulate in supplier agreements and in terms and conditions of purchase that suppliers only supply packaging material that complies with the essential requirements.

• Share information about the essential requirements with buyers, marketers or logistics personnel and inform them of this file.

• Keep the file current.

Further information

The Netherlands Institute for Sustainable Packaging (KIDV) has produced a series of factsheets on the criteria for packaging, such as the so-called essential requirements. This series consists of seven factsheets. You can download the factsheets from our website, www.kidv.nl (Library – Factsheets).

Afvalfonds Verpakkingen (the Packaging Waste Fund) has developed a guide to accompany the essential requirements, you can find more information [here](#).

You can find the footnotes for this factsheet on the reverse.



¹ [Factsheet | Essential requirements](#) provides an introduction to the Essential Requirements.

² Source: Incpen, Table for One, 2009 and Brondocument Verpakkingen, Milieu Centraal, 2013.

³ Potential strategies for optimizing product-packaging combinations:

Lighter packaging

- * Lighter packaging for the same product.
- * More product in the same packaging.

Design for recycling

- * The amount of re-used material (recyclate) in packaging is increasing.
- * After use, the packaging is easier to separate and present for recycling.

More efficient logistics

- * Avoid the use of air in the product packaging or packaging used during transportation.
- * Packaging for a more concentrated product.

Shelf life and loss of product

- * The packaging extends the shelf life of the product.
- * The packaging prevents product wastage, damage or loss.

Litter

- * The design of the packaging helps reduce litter.