



Fall 2011

REGIONAL AFFILIATE CERTIFICATE GROUP (RACG) GROUP CHAIN OF CUSTODY CERTIFICATION

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

Sponsored By: Printing Industries of New England, Printing Industries Alliance, Printing and Imaging Association of Mid America, Printing Industries of Ohio/Northern Kentucky, Printing Association of Florida, Printing Industries of the Carolinas, Printing Industry of Minnesota, Printing Industries of Illinois, Printing Industries of the South, Pacific Printing Industries, Graphic Arts Association, and Printing Industries of Michigan, Printing Industries Association of Southern California, Printing and Graphics Association MidAtlantic.

Group certification under the FSC logo is available to qualified, eligible companies who are members in good standing with their sponsoring regional PIA affiliate. Companies applying for group certification must have annual sales less than \$5 million in Forest Product Business (generally commercial printing, package printing, etc). Total sales can exceed \$5 million if there are divisions **separately conducting mailing, website development/hosting, fulfillment, etc.** Sales volumes will be subject to audit by program auditors.

There is no difference between individual certificates and the group certificate as regards the use of the logo, the requirements for organization, and the use of certified papers on projects utilizing the FSC logo.

Because of the aggregating, the costs for certification are substantially reduced from the single certificate process. The group guidelines allow a subset of all companies to be fully audited (by random) and all participating firms will receive an "internal", or overview audit on an annual basis. **All firms will be visited!**

The group, RACG, has engaged a Group Manager to provide training, oversight, and operations assistance to all participating members and a certified auditing firm to conduct the full audits. Using his experience and knowledge, our group manager will be able to reduce the time and effort currently required of individual certificate holders and applicants. He will assist participating companies in reducing the administrative burden of initial and ongoing FSC certification. Printing Industries Alliance staff will be a resource and advocate for this program as well. Feel free to contact us throughout your involvement for assistance.

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Interested member companies need to complete and submit the **Group Participation Form** and fee. This form should be submitted to Printing Industries Alliance, who is acting as the group coordinator and will transmit your information to the group manager.

Group FSC certification fee is currently \$1,695 per year inclusive of travel for auditors and group managers. Companies interested in joining the group are requested to submit the full fee with their application in order for us to release forms and to schedule plant visits for certification.

Participating companies will be individually responsible for compliance with conditions relative to utilization of the FSC logo and audit requirements. Any liability for failure to do so will rest solely with the individual non-compliant company and not with the RAGC, its collective participants, or sponsoring organizations.

Participating companies recognize that ongoing participation in RACG is contingent upon maintaining membership in good standing in Printing Industries Alliance and complying with all FSC guidelines for Chain of Custody Certification.

Companies who are currently FSC certified and wish to transfer into the group program need to provide sufficient time to schedule a site visit and submit documentation. Generally, this can be done 30-45 days from the receipt of your completed Enrollment Form and \$1,695.00 fee.

If you are interested in participating in RACG, please provide all of the information on the enclosed form and return it through Printing Industries Alliance so we can forward to the group coordinator to schedule the initial visit.

CONTACTS

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Certifier

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