



Frequently Asked Questions:

Activewear Marketing Claims from UL's South Asia Virtual Summit for Softlines

Question

What is the industry standard for antibacterial and antimicrobial claim testing?

Seemanta Mitra: There are different types of industry standards for antibacterial and antimicrobial testing. There is the American standard, there is a Japanese standard, there is even an International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standard, just to name a few. It is very important to be clear about what we are looking for here.

When you're talking about microbes, there are different types of microbes. It could be bacteria, fungi or a virus. So, when you are talking about antimicrobial testing, the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists (AATCC) has two test methods:

- The AATCC-100 is the quantitative test method for antibacterial
- The AATCC-30 is for antimold and/or antifungus testing

There is no test method for virus testing for antimicrobial claims.

When testing for antibacterial, the most common test method is either the AATCC-100, which is the quantitative test method for antibacterial testing, or (ISO) 20743, which is the European equivalent, but they are not exactly the same test methods for antibacterial testing.

Manufacturers have to be very careful about what type of claim they make. An antimicrobial claim is a very broad claim, and we don't test for all types of microbes, but an antibacterial claim has specific bacteria that we use for testing.

Question

What type of bacteria is generally used for anti-odor testing?

Seemanta Mitra: Most odor is generally related to bacteria, and therefore we do antibacterial testing. The most common test method is AATCC-100, which is the quantitative test method.

We test for two types of bacteria. One is *Staphylococcus aureus*, which is a gram-positive bacteria and there's *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, which is a gram-negative bacteria. Other suitable types of bacteria could be used during the test method, but these are the two most common ones that are used for AATCC-100 testing.



Question

What is the general industry requirement for water repellency and wash cycle?

Seemanta Mitra: The most common test method that is usually used for water repellency is the AATCC-22, which is called the “Spray Test.” When you’re looking at a water repellent product, some sort of finish is applied to it.

We test it both in the original, or as we call it, the “as received” state, as well as after three to five washes, according to the laundering instructions. Generally, the requirement is a minimum of 90 for the original state and a minimum of 70 for after-wash.

About the speaker

Seemanta Mitra is the global technical leader for softlines at UL.

Seemanta provides global technical leadership and drives consistency, integrity and quality in the application of testing, inspection and certification (TIC) requirements for Softlines.

With over 20 years’ experience, Seemanta is well-established in the textiles industry.

He is a senior member of the American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists (AATCC) and is active in the work of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM), American Apparel and Footwear Association (AAFA), including their Restricted Substance List Task Force, and Canadian Apparel Federation (CAF).

Seemanta holds a Bachelor of Science in textile technology from the University of Calcutta, and a Master of Science in textile, fiber and polymer science from Clemson University.

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