

General Merchandise - Technical, Quality & Sustainability - Technical Bulletin

Apparel and Home

Higg FEM ID Requirements, Updates and Deadlines

ATTENTION: Walmart US Suppliers

*Note: this bulletin is relevant for suppliers of Apparel, Accessories, Footwear and Home **textile** products only. If you are a Hard Home supplier of products that do not contain a **textile** component, this bulletin can be disregarded.*

April 26, 2023

EFFECTIVE DATE: 07/01/2023

SUBJECT: Higg ID & Facility Environmental Module (FEM) Requirements, Updates and Deadlines

Upcoming Higg ID Reporting Requirement:

In an effort to provide transparency and drive supply chain sustainability, beginning July 1, 2023, all fabric mills and wet processing facilities should have both a Walmart Mill ID **and** a Higg ID. If the facility doesn't have a Higg ID, the testing lab will put the report on hold until you provide the Higg ID that corresponds to the facility's Mill ID. Failure to provide the Higg ID will result in a Failed rating.

- As a reminder, if you need to obtain a Mill ID for a new facility, the registration forms are located on Retail Link: *Product Quality and Compliance Library > Sustainability > Mill ID Program*
 - Please reach out to either Bureau Veritas (walmarttesting@bureauveritas.com) or UL (BEN.SoftlinesCustomerService@ul.com) to submit the forms and obtain a Mill ID. **The Higg ID field will now be required in order to obtain a Mill ID.**
 - If you need to add a Higg ID for a previously-registered mill, please email BV or UL to do so.
- For instructions about how mills can obtain a Higg ID, visit the "Get Started" tab at <https://howtohigg.org/walmart-facility-guidelines-2022/>
 - It is free to get a Higg account and ID. Payment is not required until the facility purchases access to the Higg FEM self-assessment.

Reminder that facilities producing for Walmart must complete the self-assessment every year, and complete third-party verification every other year.

Higg FEM Updates & Deadlines:

Higg FEM Deadlines:

- April 30, 2023: the Sustainable Apparel Coalition's deadline to post and share the Higg FEM 2022 self-assessment (**facilities can still post and share their FEM until December 31, 2023, but they won't be able to make any changes after posting**)
 - Remember that facilities need to **share** their module with Walmart's Higg ID: 17405
- October 31, 2023: final deadline to purchase the Higg FEM and vFEM 2022 in order to report
- December 31, 2023: final deadline to post and share both the Higg FEM and vFEM 2022

Thank you for all your work so far in the Walmart Mill Sustainability Program/Higg FEM. As of January 2023, approximately 96% apparel and home suppliers of textile products have at least a portion of their mills and wet processing facilities reporting with the Higg FEM. That is a great achievement, and going forward we expect to have **ALL** of your mills and wet processing facilities participating in the program.

Continuous improvement: Consistent reporting is important, and so is continuous improvement. It is expected that facilities achieve a minimum of Level 1 in all sections of the Higg FEM by 2025 (achieving Level 1 shows awareness, understanding and measurement in the various sections). Many facilities have already exceeded this expectation and are encouraged to strive for Level 2 and Level 3 (which is achieved by setting targets, planning, utilizing aspirational practices and showing results). Demonstrated year-over-year improvement and achievement of progressively higher levels make facilities more competitive in our mill matrix.

Training option for facilities still needing to reach Level 1: NimkarTek, a Higg FEM trainer body approved by the Sustainable Apparel Coalition, has created an on-demand Higg FEM Level 1 course for facilities that produce fabrics for Walmart products. Facilities will learn what is required to reach Level 1 in all seven sections of the Higg FEM. The course fee is \$120 USD and is available in English and Chinese. Facilities that still need to reach Level 1 are encouraged to sign up and take the course here: <https://notes.nimkartek.com/walmart/>. They will receive a certificate of achievement at the end, which they can share with you.

This notice applies to: **Apparel:** 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34
 Home: 14, 17, 20, 22, 71, 74

ACTION NEEDED:

Vendors: Please update your records to reflect these changes.

Labs: Please update any applicable internal documents to reflect these changes.

Labs: Please distribute this notice to the appropriate vendor distribution list.

Walmart has authorized our approved test laboratories to solicit required information on Walmart’s behalf in an effort to assure compliance and minimize any disruption to our supply chain.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS:

Please direct any questions to Julia Nehring Lockhouse at Julia.Nehring@walmart.com or:

Domestic Suppliers	Direct Import Suppliers
<u>Apparel</u> • Alan Biggerstaff (Alan.Biggerstaff@walmart.com)	<u>Apparel</u> • Vanath Lourdusamy (V.Lourdusamy@walmart.com)
<u>Home</u> • Scott Wedge (Scott.Wedge@walmart.com)	<u>Home</u> • Shwetank Saket (Shwetank.Saket@walmart.com)

Quality Manual and Documents:

Retail Link > Apps > Product Quality and Compliance Library (Abbrev. PQ)

Supplier Communications:

Product Quality and Compliance Library > a2 Supplier Communications
> Sustainability Supplier Communications