

INDEPENDENT LIMITED ASSURANCE STATEMENT



To: The Stakeholders of W.W. Grainger, Inc.

Introduction and objectives of work

Apex Companies, LLC (Apex) has been engaged by W.W. Grainger, Inc. (Grainger) to provide limited assurance of its global water withdrawal and landfilled and recycled waste. This Assurance Statement applies to the Subject Matter included within the scope of work described below.

This information and its presentation are the sole responsibility of the management of Grainger. Our sole responsibility was to provide independent assurance on the accuracy of the Subject Matter.

Scope of work

The scope of our work was limited to assurance over water consumption and waste quantity data for the period January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022 (the 'Subject Matter'). Our assurance does not extend to any other information reported by Grainger.

Reporting Boundaries

The following are the boundaries used by Grainger for reporting sustainability data:

- Operational Control
- Worldwide Operations

Data verified:

WATER (KGals)	
Water Withdrawal-Municipal Supplies	133,190

WASTE (Short Tons)	
Landfilled	11,834
Recycled	36,160

Reporting Protocols against which verification was conducted:

- CDP Guidance for Companies, for Corporate Reporting on Water on Behalf of Investors and Supply Chain Members (Water Withdrawal)
- Company protocol (Waste Generation)

Limitations and Exclusions

Excluded from the scope of our work is any verification of information relating to:

- Activities outside the defined verification period;

This limited assurance engagement relies on a risk based selected sample of sustainability data and the associated limitations that this entails. The reliability of the reported data is dependent on the accuracy of metering and other production measurement arrangements employed at site level, not addressed as part of this assurance. This independent statement should not be relied upon to detect all errors, omissions or misstatements that may exist.

Responsibilities

This preparation and presentation of the water withdrawal and waste data are the sole responsibility of the management of Grainger.

Apex was not involved in the development, tracking, or reporting of the water withdrawal and waste data. Our responsibilities were to:

- obtain limited assurance about whether the Subject Matter has been prepared in accordance with the Reporting Criteria;
- form an independent conclusion based on the assurance procedures performed and evidence obtained; and
- report our conclusions to the Stakeholders of Grainger.

Assessment Standards

- We performed our work in accordance with Apex's standard procedures and guidelines for external Assurance of Sustainability Reports and International Standard on Assurance Engagements (ISAE) 3000 Revised, Assurance Engagements Other than Audits or Reviews of Historical Financial Information (effective for assurance reports dated on or after Dec. 15, 2015), issued by the International Auditing and Assurance Standards Board. A materiality threshold of ± 5 -percent was set for the assurance process.

Summary of Work Performed

As part of our independent verification, our work included:

1. Assessing the appropriateness of the Reporting Criteria for the Subject Matter;
2. Conducting interviews with relevant personnel of Grainger;
3. Reviewing the data collection and consolidation processes used to compile Subject Matter, including assessing assumptions made, and the data scope and reporting boundaries;
4. Reviewing documentary evidence provided by Grainger;
5. Comparing a selection of the Subject Matter to the corresponding source documentation;
6. Reviewing Grainger systems for quantitative data aggregation and analysis; and
7. Assessing the disclosure and presentation of the Subject Matter to ensure consistency with assured information.

Conclusion

On the basis of our methodology and the activities described above:

- Nothing has come to our attention to indicate that the Subject Matter is not fairly stated in all material respects; and
- It is our opinion that Grainger has established appropriate systems for the collection, aggregation and analysis of quantitative data.

Statement of Independence, Integrity and Competence


Apex is an independent professional services company that specializes in Health, Safety, Social and Environmental management services including assurance with over 30 years history in providing these services.

Apex has implemented a Code of Ethics across the business to maintain high ethical standards among staff in their day-to-day business activities.

No member of the assurance team has a business relationship with Grainger, its Directors or Managers beyond that required of this assignment. We have conducted this verification independently, and there has been no conflict of interest.

The assurance team has extensive experience in conducting assurance over environmental, social, ethical and health and safety information, systems and processes, has over 20 years combined experience in this field and an excellent understanding of Apex's standard methodology for the verification of greenhouse gas emissions data.

Attestation:



Trevor Donaghu, Lead Verifier
Program Manager
Apex Companies, LLC
Pleasant Hill, California



Scott Johnston, Technical Reviewer
Principal Consultant
Apex Companies, LLC
Doral, Florida

June 16, 2023