



FOREIGN STANDARDS OVERVIEW

When exporters market their products overseas, they need to consider whether their products meet the regulations in their prospective buyer/enduser's country. For example, a calculator sold in France must comply with the "CE Mark" in order for the buyer/distributor in France to be able to legally offer the calculator for sale. Similarly, consumer products exported to Mexico require compliance to "NOMs," which are the official product standards in Mexico, covering criteria such as labeling. The U.S. federal government has resources available for exporters regarding foreign standards at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

Below is an overview of foreign standards, including the NIST, the European Union's CE Mark, Mexico's NOMs, the Canadian Customs Invoice (CCI) Requirements, ISO 9000, the Free Sale Certificate, an example of packaging regulations on pallets to the EU and China, and a recent example of a foreign standard that went in to effect in 2003: the CCC for China.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS & TECHNOLOGY (NIST)

NIST is a non-regulatory federal agency within the United States Department of Commerce's Technology Administration. Their mission is to develop and promote measurements, standards and technology in order to enhance productivity and facilitate trade.

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) has coordinated requests with the NIST and can help you with information about foreign standards relevant to specific countries. The NIST's website is: <http://www.nist.gov>.

EUROPEAN UNION– CE MARK

By the year 2004, an estimated half of United States exports to the EU will require the CE mark (Conformité Européenne).

The CE mark indicates that a product has met essential health, safety and performance requirements by design or testing. It is required for a wide range of products, including machinery, electronics, toys, medical devices and telecommunications equipment. There are specific rules for software in data encryption and where databases may be kept. All companies have to meet CE mark requirements in order to sell their products within the European market. The European Commission describes the CE mark as a "passport" that allows manufacturers to circulate industrial and consumer products freely within the internal market of the EU. Physically, the CE mark is a small label/mark placed on the product (similar to the "UL" mark seen in the United States).

EU Member States: Austria; Germany; Netherlands; Belgium; Greece; Portugal; Denmark; Ireland; Spain; Finland; Italy; Sweden; France; Luxembourg; United Kingdom; Cyprus; Czech Republic; Estonia; Hungary; Latvia; Lithuania; Malta; Poland; Romania; Bulgaria; Slovakia; Slovenia* **See VEDP Export Issues FastFact - EU & the Euro





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Some products can be self-certified by the manufacturer and do not require the intervention of an EU-authorized independent testing/certifying company. To self-certify, the manufacturer must assess the conformity of the products to the applicable directives and standards. The manufacturer may then affix the CE mark to their product following the preparation of a declaration of conformity. Note: Specific product safety hazards and warning labels generally may have to be translated into the main EU languages.

The specific information required for the declaration of conformity includes:

- the manufacturer's name and address
- the product, model number and variants
- the CE mark directives that apply to the product, such as the machinery directive 93/37/EC or the low voltage directive 73/23/EEC
- the European standards used (EN 50081-2:1993 for the EMC directive or EN 60950:1991 for the low voltage requirement for information technology)
- the signature of a company official for purposes of the company assuming liability for the safety of its product in the European market (implies liability at the individual, not corporate, level)

The VEDP has an overseas trade office in Brussels, Belgium, and can assist with further information about the CE Mark. Also, the VEDP's VALET (Virginia Leaders in Export Trade) and AIM (Accessing International Markets) programs includes partners that specialize in CE Mark certification.

MEXICO— OFFICIAL MEXICAN STANDARDS (NOMs)

"Normas Oficiales Mexicanas" (NOMs) are Mexico's product standards and labeling requirements. All products, goods, and services imported into Mexico must comply with any applicable standard and labeling requirement. However, not every product has a specific NOM. An example of a general NOM is: NOM-050-SCFI-1994 which is in reference to labeling information. This NOM states that if the product is destined for a retail outlet, then each individual item needs labeling, but if it's destined for a non-retail facility, then one label for the bulk packaging is sufficient.

The NOMs are listed in the website of the Mexican government's Secretaría de la Economía: <http://www.economia-noms.gob.mx/>

The VEDP has an overseas trade office in Mexico City, Mexico and can assist your business with further information.

CANADA CUSTOMS INVOICE (CCI) REQUIREMENTS

For most exports to Canada, the commercial invoice must contain all the data required in the Canada Customs Invoice or be shipped using a fully completed Canada Customs Invoice. The Canada Customs Invoice is available on the website of Canada's Customs and Revenue Agency Virtual Customs Office at: <http://www.ccr-aadrc.gc.ca/vco>. Click on "Forms and Publications," go to "All Forms," then "A to S." Scroll down to C11, "Canada Customs Invoice."



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INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STANDARDIZATION (ISO)

Standards, such as the ISO 9000 program, are documented agreements containing technical specifications or other precise criteria to be used consistently as rules, guidelines and definitions to ensure that materials, products, processes and services are in compliance and actually help in international marketing. For example, the format of credit cards, phone cards, and "smart" cards that are commonly used by consumers worldwide is derived from an ISO International Standard which defines such features as the optimal thickness of these cards. For more information about the ISO and its standards programs, please see their website at: <http://www.iso.org/iso/en/>

“FREE SALE CERTIFICATE” FOR FOOD & COSMETICS EXPORTS

Some countries or a foreign company may require, as part of their in-country product standards, that a U.S. exporter provide a Certificate of Export/Free Sale Certificate. This certificate indicates that the product can be freely sold in the United States and that there are no known safety concerns about the product or the company that manufactures it.

The United States Food and Drug Administration manages the issuance of these certificates such as for cosmetic products as well as food-related items.

The VEDP can help with further information. Also see the United States Food and Drug Administration's website: www.fda.gov (see "international" link).

See **VEDP Export Issues FastFact - Export Licensing**

PACKAGING STANDARDS

Examples:

EU:

According to the European Commission, as of 2001 all U.S. exporters using non-manufactured wood packing (NMWP) material such as crates, boxes, and pallets in shipments originating from the US, Canada, China, or Japan need to certify that the coniferous wood (such as pinewood) pallets/packaging material have been heat treated or kiln dried to prevent the introduction of the pinewood nematode.

For further information, the U.S. Department of Commerce has a Standards Specialist at the EU Commercial Service, in Brussels, Belgium: e-mail: sylvia.mohr@mail.doc.gov.

China:

As of 2000, all solid wood packing materials (SWPM) made from coniferous wood used in shipments from the U.S. need to be heat treated. Exporters can "self-certify" their shipments if there are no coniferous hardwoods used in their packaging, by providing a signed statement on their company letterhead stating that the shipment contains no wood packing materials or that there are no coniferous wood pallets used or that any coniferous materials have been heat-treated. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has more information about wood packaging material and the "declaration of non-coniferous wood packing material" available via their website at:

www.aphis.usda.gov or 301-734-8531



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THE CHINA COMPULSORY CERTIFICATION MARK

The China Compulsory Certification (CCC) mark is China's newest quality and safety mark, implemented August 1, 2003. Refer to the U.S. Dept of Commerce's report "China's CCC Mark: A Guide for U.S. Exporters", available at:

<http://www.mac.doc.gov/China/Docs/BusinessGuides/cccguid.htm>

Since 1989, the People's Republic of China has had a safety licensing system which included different certifications. As the Chinese certification system grew through the 1990s, many companies exporting to China raised concerns about the dual certification systems, redundant testing, and different treatment of domestic and imported products. The CCC mark system merges the earlier marks, and it entails many of the same requirements as the previous certifications. China's Certification and Accreditation Administration (CNCA) oversees the new standards system, which was developed in response to the requirements of the country's accession to the World Trade Organization.

(Source: "China's CCC Mark: A Guide for U.S. Exporters" at: <http://www.mac.doc.gov/China/Docs/BusinessGuides/cccguid.htm>)

The China Quality Certification Center (CQC), at <http://www.ccc-cn.org/cccfqc.htm>, includes information on applying for the CCC mark.

To determine if your product requires the CCC mark, the China Quality Certification Center's website has a catalog listing by product categories at: www.cqc.com.cn/ccc/catalogureeng.pdf. There are 132 types of products that require the CCC mark, covering 19 categories such as electrical wires and cables, electrical tools, information technology equipment, and motor vehicle tires.

The component parts of your manufactured finished product may in some cases require CCC certification. In those cases, the component manufacturer (Original Equipment Manufacturer – OEM) is generally required to apply for the CCC mark.

In addition to a listing of certification and export compliance firms available from the VEDP's VALET program, the U.S. Dept of Commerce offers a list of companies providing services in CCC certification at: www.mac.doc.gov/China/Docs/BusinessGuides/cccguid.htm

Also, the VEDP's Hong Kong office can assist your company with specific questions on regulations in China.



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THE EUROPEAN UNION RESTRICTION ON HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (EU) initiated the Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) Directive to help protect human health and the environment from environmental contamination concerns.

The new directive goes into effect July 1, 2006 and applies to a wide range of manufacturers who sell product in the European market. The directive was issued to control the potential for hazardous waste arising from manufactured products. Under the provisions, there are key restrictions in the manufacture of electrical and electronic equipment to avoid the use of hazardous substances including lead, cadmium, mercury, hexavalent chromium, polybrominated biphenyls (PBB) and polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE).

To comply with the EU RoHS legislation, all of the substances must be removed or must be reduced to within maximum allowable concentrations. Manufacturers are responsible for demonstrating that their products comply with these requirements and leading governmental authorities will be in charge of enforcement.

Equipment that must demonstrate compliance to the new RoHS Directive includes:

- Small household appliances
- Large household appliances
- Consumer equipment
- Information technology and telecommunication equipment
- Lighting equipment
- Electrical and electronic tools (with the exception of large-scale stationary industrial tools)
- Toys, leisure and sports equipment
- Automatic dispensers

Manufacturers who meet the requirements of the RoHS Directive will receive an official Letter of Compliance from NSF indicating that they have met the requirements of the new Directive. Manufacturers falling under the above categories will maintain this letter as a demonstration of compliance. Alternatively, suppliers who provide parts to these manufacturers will use their letter to demonstrate compliance to prospective buyers.

For more information, please visit NSF International: <http://www.nsf.org/business/rohs/faq.asp>



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VEDP TRADE EVENTS

For a complete listing of VEDP's international trade events, please visit the "Events" tab on our website: www.ExportVirginia.org

VEDP CONTACT INFORMATION

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Directory of International Organizations and Standards Resources:

<http://www.infogoal.com/dmc/dmcstd.htm>

China's CCC Mark: A Guide for U.S. Exporters

WORKS CITED

NSF International. <http://www.nsf.org/business/rohs/faq.asp>

Tim Wineland, Chris Johnston and Maria Mussler, "China's CCC Mark: A Guide For U.S. Exporters". Export America Magazine, April 2003, U.S Dept of Commerce.

<http://www.export.gov/exportamerica/>

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