

Selling new electrical appliances and equipment

April 2005

The *Electricity Act 1945* prohibits the sale of many household electrical appliances unless the approval of the Director of Energy Safety or an Australian electrical regulatory authority is first obtained. The approval process is referred to as the Uniform Approvals Scheme and it is administered nationally by each State and Territory. This fact sheet provides general information about the approvals process.

Household electrical appliances

Exposure to the risks of electricity is greatest for most people at the point where it does its job - at electrical appliances and equipment. The cords that connect electrical appliances to the power supply are also high risk items.

The *Electricity Act 1945* empowers the Director of Energy Safety to prescribe those classes and types of electrical appliances that can only be sold, hired or advertised, provided they are first approved by the Director or an interstate electrical regulatory authority. The Director has declared that the appliances which are to be "prescribed" are those listed in Appendix E4 of Australian/New Zealand Standard *AS/NZS 4417.2:1996 Marking of electrical products to indicate compliance with regulations, Part 2: Specific requirements for electrical safety regulatory applications*.

The types of appliances that are included in the list are those which, due to their design, manufacture or end use, present, or are most likely to present, an electrical safety risk to users. Other articles that have previously caused electric shock or fire incidents are also included in the list, to compel manufacturers or importers to have their products designed and built to Australian safety standards.

The *Electricity Regulations 1947* specify that, in order to obtain approval to sell or hire prescribed appliances, evidence must be provided to show that the appliances are safe. This evidence is usually provided in the form of a test report from an independent approved testing laboratory which shows that the relevant appliance complies with the appropriate Australian electrical safety standard which is current at the time. The appliance must then be submitted to an interstate electrical regulatory authority or Standards Australia International Global for approval, and if granted, the appliance is marked with the number shown on the Certificate of Approval.

An appliance approval that is issued in any one State is recognised by all other electrical regulatory authorities.

Applications for a Certificate of Approval should be submitted to one of the Australian electrical regulatory authorities listed on the following page. The application must be accompanied by an application fee and a test report from an approved independent testing laboratory engaged by the applicant to verify that the appliance has been tested in accordance with the relevant Australian electrical safety standard and complies with all requirements. A sample of the appliance is also required for verification.

Test reports issued by testing laboratories which are recognised by the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) (Australia) or the International Accreditation New Zealand (IANZ) and test reports with certificates issued under the International Electrotechnical Commission Electrical Equipment Certification Body (IECEE CB) scheme are accepted by Australian electrical regulatory authorities.

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Consumer Protection Advice Line 1300 30 40 54
Labour Relations Wageline Call Centre 1300 655 266
WorkSafe Infoline 1300 307 877
Energy Safety (08) 9422 5200
Email: online@docep.wa.gov.au
Internet: www.docep.wa.gov.au



Department of Consumer
and Employment Protection
Government of Western Australia

Industrial and commercial electrical appliances

Many electrical articles and items of installed electrical equipment are of the type that are not specified in the list of prescribed appliances.

Persons who sell or hire these types of articles are nevertheless responsible under the Common Law for ensuring that they are safe to be connected to the electricity supply. However, it is not necessary to obtain the approval of an Australian electrical regulatory authority before selling or hiring these articles.

To demonstrate the electrical safety of a non-prescribed article, the seller should obtain a test report that shows the results of testing this appliance to appropriate safety standards. This report can then be produced upon request from an Inspecting Authority or a prospective buyer.

Alternatively, the seller may request an Australian electrical regulatory authority (as listed below) to issue a Certificate of Suitability for the article.

Regardless of whether an appliance is prescribed or not, the electric cord and plug on all electrical appliances must be an approved type and identified as such.

Australian electrical regulatory authorities that offer appliance approval services

Approval enquiries may be directed to any one of the following electrical regulatory authorities:

Office of the Chief Electrical Inspector - Victoria

Telephone: (03) 9203 9700
Facsimile: (03) 9686 2197
Email: info@ocei.vic.gov.au
Website: <http://www.ocei.vic.gov.au>

Electrical Safety Office - Queensland

Telephone: (07) 3237 0281
Facsimile: (07) 3406 3808
Website: <http://www.eso.qld.gov.au/index.htm>

Department of Fair Trading - New South Wales

Telephone: (02) 9895 0702
Facsimile: (02) 9895 0423
Email: enquiry@fairtrading.nsw.gov.au
Website: <http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au>

Purchase of Australian Standards

Australian Standards may be purchased electronically from SAI Global Ltd at <http://www.standards.com.au/catalogue/script/search.asp> or in hard copy by contacting SAI Global Ltd at:

Telephone: 1300 654 646
Facsimile: 1300 654 949
Email: sales@sai-global.com