



## Beginners Guide for Manufacturers: Construction Products Certification

## **The Manufacturers Guide to Construction Product Certification**

*Before selling your construction products it is crucial that you are able to determine if they have met applicable regulatory requirements. Ensuring that the appropriate product certification marks appear on these products will provide you with the assurance that your product will not be 'red-tagged' on a job site or held up at the United States or Canadian border.*

*This guide provides you with the tools, resources, and information necessary to gain a better understanding of the process and applicable product certification marks.*

### **How does product certification benefit manufacturers?**

Product certification provides a tangible measure of assurance to inspectors and AHJ's that products meet applicable regulatory requirements.

### **Which products require a certification mark?**

Standards have been developed for, and are applicable to, virtually all products that pose fire, shock, or personal damage hazards.

### **Is product certification mandatory?**

Within North America, product testing is mandatory before market entry. However, the choice in testing partners to conduct the testing is up to the manufacturer. Here are a few facts about Intertek's WH Mark:

- The WH Mark is recognized by all Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJs) including building code officials, fire marshals, and inspectors across North America;
- Intertek is recognized by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) as an Accredited Certification Body;
- Intertek is accredited by the Standards Council of Canada as an accredited Testing Organization and Certification Body;
- The WH Mark is a recognized alternative to the CSA and UL marks for Canada and the US.

### **What advantages does the WH Mark offer manufacturers?**

>> Our turnaround time and superior service can increase your efficiency and reduce your time to market.

>> Our global network of labs enables us to work with you wherever your manufacturing sites are located to obtain the credentials needed to enter markets worldwide.

>> The WH Mark provides you with the necessary confidence that the products you sell have been tested and certified by one of the world's most qualified independent laboratories.

## **Aren't manufacturers required to use CSA or UL for their testing? Isn't this mandated by the standards themselves?**

The simple answer to both questions is "no." In fact, this misconception has misled many manufacturers to believe that they don't have a choice in their third-party testing partner. To satisfy the prerequisite of having products tested by an independent organization, the true legal requirement is that the testing laboratory must be an ANSI accredited Certification Body, and OSHA recognized Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL) or an accredited Testing Organization and Certification Body by SCC; all of which Intertek is. Intertek is also recognized worldwide as a competent testing, inspection and certification organization, and the WH Mark serves as proof of product compliance with national standards.

## **Is there a difference between the WH, CSA, and UL Marks?**

No. Each mark demonstrates that the product has met the minimum requirements of widely accepted standards as determined through independent testing. And, as part of that testing regimen, you have agreed to periodic follow-up inspections to verify continued compliance.

So, why would a manufacturer choose the WH Mark over the CSA or UL Mark? The only real difference between the marks is in the service, and services, of the testing laboratory behind them. It's here that Intertek's clients enjoy the real differences between the marks. Our custom-tailored testing, quick turnarounds, and flexible work methods are literally changing the face of the industry by promoting an environment where the testing lab and product manufacturer work more collaboratively - bringing products to market more quickly, more smoothly, and more cost-effectively than ever before.

## **Who looks for certification marks?**

In addition to safety minded consumers, a variety of people and/or organizations expect to see certification marks on construction products. This includes architects, code officials, AHJ's and inspectors. Given that jurisdictional authority expectations vary from city to city and region to region, a nationally recognized certification mark is beneficial to manufacturers throughout North America.

## **What does a certification mark tell me?**

Certification marks such as WH, CSA, and UL signify that the product has been tested to, and found to comply with, national standards by a qualified, independent testing laboratory. The presence of a certification mark also means the product is listed in the directory of the laboratory that verified the product's compliance and is part of an on-going follow-up program that ensures the products continued compliance during manufacturing.

***The WH Mark*** - A product bearing the WH Mark with the "us" identifier at the 4 o'clock position has been tested and deemed compliant to U.S. product safety standards only. A WH Mark with a "c"



identifier at the 8 o'clock position means the product bearing it complies with Canadian product safety standards only. And a WH Mark with both "us" and "c" identifiers at the 4 o'clock and 8 o'clock positions respectively, signifies that the product bearing the mark complies with both U.S. and Canadian product safety standards.

### Who sets the standards?

The standards themselves are developed through a consensus process that takes into account the viewpoints of manufacturers, the insurance industry, private organizations and the general public. The standards are then sponsored by non-government organizations such as the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), ASTM and CSA.

### What are examples of North American certification marks commonly found on construction products?

Within North America, product certification marks follow the same identifying convention. A product bearing a mark with the "us" identifier at the 4 o'clock position has been tested and deemed compliant to U.S. standards only. A mark with a "c" identifier at the 8 o'clock position means the product bearing it complies with Canadian standards only. And a mark with both "us" and "c" identifiers at the 4 o'clock and 8 o'clock positions respectively, signifies that the product bearing the mark complies with both U.S. and Canadian standards. When a mark appears with no identifiers this also means the product bearing the mark complies with both U.S. and Canadian standards.

Among the North American certification marks commonly found on construction products are the following, provided by the following testing and certification organizations:

#### *The WH Mark provided by Intertek*



#### *The UL Listed Mark provided by Underwriters Laboratories*



#### *The CSA Listed Mark provided by CSA International*



## About Intertek

Intertek does more than simply help our clients comply, we give them the competitive advantage they desire. Our Building Products solutions offer comprehensive services including, product testing and analysis, certification and corporate education appropriate for all types and levels of business. Intertek is a leader in global compliance, technology services and product stewardship.

Intertek is more than a testing laboratory; we guide our clients through the "Built Environment," helping them identify all the regulatory certifications they need for the environments where their products will be used. This reduces costs and ultimately accelerates time to market.

We provide quality and safety solutions to a wide range of industries, through a network of 24,000 people in 1000 laboratories and offices in 100 countries around the world. Through our global network of labs, Intertek can test and certify your products to meet British, European and North American codes and standards, including ANSI, ASTM, CSA, EPA, ICBO, UL, and ULC. We offer manufacturers access to some of the most recognized safety certifications in the world. Our WH (Warnock Hersey) Mark for building products is recognized among industry leading manufacturers and code officials across North America and around the world. Our ETL Mark for electrical/electronic products is the fastest growing safety certification mark in North America, widely accepted by AHJs and building code officials.

## The next step

Call or e-mail Intertek to get expert advice on and learn more about Building Products testing and certification:

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- Web: [www.intertek.com](http://www.intertek.com)

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