



Australian and New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 4399:1996 - Sun protective clothing - Evaluation and classification

Over exposure to UV radiation can cause sunburn and skin damage. Clothing provides one of the most convenient forms of protection against UVR but not all garments offer sufficient sun protection.

Australian/New Zealand standard AS/NZS 4399 introduces test method of measuring UPF rating, classification, labeling and marking for the sun protective clothing. This standard is intended to provide information to the consumer on the relative capability textiles and apparel to provide protection against solar ultraviolet radiation in order to assist consumers in the selection items which best suit their need for sun protection.

The UPF testing involves exposing a fabric to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) and measuring how much is transmitted through the sample. Different wavelengths of radiation in the UVR spectrum have different effects on human skin and this is taken into consideration when calculating the UPF rating. Whereas UPF ratings range from 15 - 50 with higher ratings indicating more effective blocking and therefore better protection for the wearer of a garment made from the fabric. Fabrics that test higher than UPF 50 are rated as UPF 50+.

For the purposes of labeling, sun protective clothing shall be categorized according to the UPF classification system. The sun protection rating is classified as: Good Protection (UPF 15, 20), Very Good Protection (UPF 25, 30, 35), or Excellent Protection (UPF 40, 45, 50, 50+).

This standard also specifies appropriate wording to be placed on labels of clothing claiming to offer sun protection. Suppliers making a statement of compliance with the Joint Australian/New Zealand AS/NZS 4399 on a product, packaging or promotional material related to that product are advised to ensure that such compliance is capable of being verified.

The Solution

Intertek Hong Kong is pleased to announce that measuring the ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) rating, classification, labeling and marking review for textile clothing to the standard AS/NZS 4399 can be conducted from August 2012.

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