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CALIFORNIA WEIGHTS AND MEASURES LABEL REQUIREMENTS

This is a brief summary of major regulations adopted by the State of California, pursuant to the Fair Packaging and Labeling Act, for packages in general.

For complete requirements, consult the California Code of Regulations Title 4.

NOTE: Other agencies may have different or additional labeling requirements (i.e., ingredient or nutritional labeling).

Packages and their labels should enable consumers to obtain accurate information as to the quantity of the contents and should facilitate value comparisons.

The **three basic requirements** are:

1. A declaration of **identity** that is the common or usual name of the commodity.
2. A declaration of **responsibility** that includes the **name, address, and zip code** of the manufacturer, packer, or distributor. A street address is required if the name is not listed in a current directory. The connection of a distributor must be shown (e.g., "packed for", "distributed by"). This statement is not required to be on the principal display panel.
3. A declaration of the **quantity** of the commodity in the lower 30% of the principal display panel area, in a size depending upon the area of the principal display panel.

UNITS OF WEIGHT OR MEASURE: Consumer packages are **required** to have both SI (metric) and inch-pound units.

Exceptions: The following may, but are not required to, have both units; labels printed before February 14, 1994, random weight packages, foods packed at retail, camera film, audio and video recording media.
There may be different requirements for the following Federally regulated commodities; meat, poultry, alcoholic beverages, drugs and cosmetics, insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, and tobacco products.
Contact the appropriate agency for specific requirements.

SI units may appear first. A converted value must not overstate the net contents.

RULE OF 1000 FOR SI UNITS: Numerical values should be between 1 and 1000 (e.g., 500 g not 0.5 kg; 1.96 kg not 1960 g; 750 ml not 0.75 l; 750 mm or 75 cm not 0.75 meters).

PRINCIPAL DISPLAY PANEL AREA DETERMINATION

This area, not the area of the label, determines the minimum height requirement of the declaration of quantity.

1. A rectangular package where an entire side is the principal display panel - height times width.
2. A cylindrical or nearly cylindrical container - 40% of the product of the height times the circumference.
3. Other shaped containers - 40% of the entire square area of the container.
4. Obvious principal display panels - the actual square area of the panel.

Determination does not include tops, bottoms or flanges of cans, or shoulders, necks of bottles or jars.

NUMBERS AND LETTERS IN THE DECLARATION OF QUANTITY

Square Area of Panel	Minimum Height (For Printer)	Minimum Height (Blown or Molded)
32 cm² (5 in²) or less	1.6 mm (1/16 in)	3.2 mm (1/8 in)
Over **32 cm²** (5 in²) to **161 cm²** (25 in²)	3.2 mm (1/8 in)	4.8 mm (3/16 in)
Over **161 cm²** (25 in²) to **645 cm²** (100 in²)	4.8 mm (3/16 in)	6.4 mm (1/4 in)
Over **645 cm²** (100 in²) to **2581 cm²** (400 in²)	6.4 mm (1/4 in)	7.9 mm (5/16 in)
Over **2581 cm²** (400 in²)	12.7 mm (1/2 in)	14.3 mm (9/16 in)

PROPORTION: Letters of a declaration of quantity must not be more than 3 times as high as they are wide. Except for blown or molded declarations, the style of type or lettering shall be bold, clear, and conspicuous against its background.

A FREE AREA equal to at least the height of the lettering is required above and below the quantity declaration. At each end, the free area must be equal to twice the width of the capital "N" of the style and size of type used.

DECIMAL FRACTIONS may be carried to three places. SI unit declarations may contain only decimal fractions. Decimal fractions are permitted in inch-pound declarations.

COMMON FRACTION use is restricted to inch-pound units and is normally limited to halves, quarters, eighths, sixteenths, and thirty-seconds to the lowest term. Each number of a fraction in a declaration of quantity must be at least 1/2 the minimum height.

ABBREVIATIONS: **Inch-pound** - avdp, lb, oz, gal, qt, pt, yd, ft, in, sq, and cu.
SI units - kg, g, mg, L or l, mL or ml, m, cm, mm, μm, m^2, dm^2, cm^2, m^3, dm^3, and cm^3.
Both systems may use - wt, fl, liq, dr, dia, pc, ea, and ct.
Periods and plural forms are not recommended for inch-pound units and are prohibited for metric.

WEIGHT DECLARATIONS: The words "net mass" or "net weight" are optional.

Less than 1 kilogram - must be stated in grams, decimals of a gram or milligrams;
1 kilogram or more - kilograms and decimals of a kilogram up to three places;
Less than 1 pound - must be stated as ounces or fraction of ounces;
1 pound or more - in pounds, with remainder in fractions of pounds, or ounces and fractions of ounces.

FLUID DECLARATIONS: The words "net" or "net contents" are optional. "Fluid" is required with ounces (e.g. 12 fl oz) unless the meaning is obvious by association (e.g. 1 pint 4 ounces).

Less than 1 liter - must be stated in milliliters;
1 liter or more - liters and decimal fractions of a liter up to three places;
Less than 1 pint - fluid ounces and fractions of an ounce;
1 pint to less than 1 gallon - largest whole unit (quarts or pints as appropriate), with remainder in ounces, fractions of pint or quart. (2 quarts may be stated as 1/2 gallon);
1 gallon or more - gallons and fractions of a gallon.

SUPPLEMENTARY DECLARATIONS: Nonrequired quantity declarations are not permitted on the principal display panel.

QUALIFYING STATEMENTS: Quantity declarations containing qualifying words are not permitted. Words such as "minimum", "approximately", "when packed" or any words that tend to exaggerate are considered qualifying words.

MULTI-UNIT, COMBINATION OR VARIETY PACKAGES: Consult the California Code of Regulations Title 4 for specific requirements.

NONCONSUMER PACKAGES

NONCONSUMER PACKAGE shall mean any package other than a consumer package, and particularly a package intended solely for industrial or institutional use or for wholesale distribution.

BASIC REQUIREMENTS: A declaration of identity of the commodity, the name, address, and zip code of the packer, and a declaration of quantity shall be prominently and conspicuously displayed on the outside of the package.

DECLARATION OF QUANTITY shall be in the largest whole unit. SI and inch-pound units may be used, individually or together.