

New household light standard addresses consumer concerns regarding electrical safety of compact fluorescents and similar lighting products

Canada, U.S.A. and Mexico publish tri-national harmonized standard for self-ballasted lamps

TORONTO, Oct. 21 /CNW/ - CSA Standards, a leading standards-based solutions organization, today officially announces the publication of a new standard for common screw-in household energy-efficient lights. The new standard goes beyond traditional requirements for electrical safety to help address consumer concerns regarding the end-of-life cycle of compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs). The new C22.2 No. 1993-09, Self-Ballasted Lamps and Lamp Adapters standard, harmonized with the U.S.A. and Mexico, will help ensure that all CFLs and similar lights sold in North America adhere to a common standard for safety.

"End-of-life" refers to a CFL no longer operating at full capacity as it becomes depleted and reaches the end of its useful life cycle. When some early models of CFLs reached their end-of-life, occasionally they would become hot resulting in smoking of the units or the base of the lamp becoming discoloured or deformed.

"CSA standards are living documents reviewed at least every five years and revised or amended as necessary to address changes in technology, usage, or public concerns," says Stephen Brown, Director, Electro-technical Program, CSA Standards. "CSA Standards and counterparts in Mexico and the U.S. recognized that consumer concerns surrounding the end-of-life cycle of CFLs could present a barrier to the market acceptance of these energy-efficient products and jointly developed new, harmonized standards to address their concerns."

CSA Standards in Canada, Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL) in America, and Mexico's National Association of Standardization and Certification for the Electrical Sector (ANCE) jointly developed the standard as members of CANENA, a Spanish acronym for the not-for-profit Council for Harmonization of Electro-technical Standards of the Nations of the Americas. All three organizations came together to develop additional test requirements for CFLs in order to reduce the end-of-life effects.

The new C22.2 No. 1993-09, Self-Ballasted Lamps and Lamp Adapters standard includes new minimum material specification for the plastic housing and several additional end-of-life product tests that better simulate potential failure modes. It is tri-national and harmonized with UL 1993 and the Mexican NMX-J-578/1-ANCE standard.

A self-ballasted lamp, such as a CFL, is a light with a special built-in filament coil in the base of the lamp that controls both starting and operating current. It is designed to operate in the same style of screw-based socket as a traditional, incandescent bulb. The C22.2 No. 1993-09, Self-Ballasted Lamps and Lamp Adapters standard covers requirements for lamp types such as fluorescent, compact fluorescent, high intensity discharge, light emitting diode (LED), and tungsten-halogen. Many lighting manufacturers have already put plans in place to implement the new requirements called for in the standard.

The new harmonized standard does not address consumer concerns related to the amount of allowable mercury that is acceptable in lighting products. CFLs typically contain a very small amount of mercury vapours sealed within the glass tubing - an average of five milligrams compared to a common mercury thermometer which contain approximately 500 milligrams. In Canada, allowable levels of mercury are established by Health Canada(1). Similarly, Health Canada is also responsible for determining acceptable levels of ultra violet (UV) radiation or electro-magnetic energy emitted by products(2). Regulations for the disposal of CFLs containing mercury are established and enforced by Environment Canada(3).

The new standard, in PDF format, is available online at www.shopcsa.ca, by calling CSA Standards Sales at 800-463-6727, or by e-mail at sales@csa.ca.

- (1) <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/environ/merc-eng.php>
- (2) <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/prod/cfl-afc-eng.php>
- (3) <http://www.ec.gc.ca/MERCURY/EN/index.cfm>

About CSA Standards

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For further information: Anthony Toderian, Manager, Media Relations, CSA Group, T: (416) 747-2620, E: anthony.toderian@csagroup.org