

Certification of Fire-Safe Cigarettes

Information for Cigarette Manufacturers

The “Reduced Cigarette Ignition Propensity Standard and Firefighter Protection Act” went into effect July 2009. Manufacturers with cigarette brand families currently listed on the West Virginia Directory of Participating Manufacturers or West Virginia Directory of Compliant Non-Participating Manufacturers must certify cigarette brands under the “The Reduced Cigarette Ignition Propensity Standard and Firefighter Protection Act”.

Why Use Fire-Safe Cigarettes?

Fire-safe cigarettes are a proven, effective way to help reduce the risk of fires started by cigarettes. Careless smoking is the leading cause of fire deaths in the U.S. and kills between 700-900 people a year. The use of cigarettes that have a reduced tendency to burn when left unattended can help prevent tens of thousands of fires each year.

According to the Fire-Safe Cigarette Coalition, the most common fire-safe technology used by cigarette manufacturers is to wrap cigarettes with two or three thin bands of less-porous paper that act as “speed bumps” to slow down a burning cigarette. If a fire-safe cigarette is left unattended, the burning tobacco will reach one of these speed bumps and self-extinguish.

Fire-safe cigarettes meet an established cigarette fire safety performance standard, based on ASTM 2187, “Standard Test Method for Measuring the Ignition Strength of Cigarettes”.

As of 2011, one hundred percent of the U.S. population will now be better protected from cigarette fires thanks to state passage of fire-safe cigarette legislation. Here in West Virginia, we are consistently at higher risk for fires and fire death and we have one of the largest populations of smokers in the nation. This means it’s more important than ever to pursue life-saving legislation such as mandatory sales of reduced-ignition propensity cigarettes.

FAQs on Fire-Safe Cigarettes

Q: What is a Fire-Safe Cigarette?

A: The most common fire-safe technology used by cigarette manufacturers is to wrap cigarettes with two or three thin bands of less-porous paper that act as “speed bumps” to slow down a burning cigarette. If a fire-safe cigarette is left unattended, the burning tobacco will reach one of these speed bumps and self-extinguish.

The actual term for these cigarettes is “reduced ignition propensity” cigarettes, which means that there is less tendency for them to continue burning. However, this does not mean that in all instances the cigarettes will not continue to burn, so the same caution should be used regardless of the term “fire-safe”.

Although “fire-safe” is a commonly used descriptor for the reduced ignition propensity cigarettes, keep in mind that there is NO SUCH THING as a truly “fire-safe” cigarette. Any item that relies on ignition in order to function is never really “fire-safe”. Always keep in mind that cigarettes and other similar products should be kept away from children, pets, bedding, upholstered furniture, and anything else that might burn.

Smokers should always use a deep, sturdy ashtray, never smoke while drowsy or using alcohol and/or prescription medications, and follow all safety precautions when exposing of smoking materials, ashes, etc.

Q: Where can I find more information about Fire-Safe Cigarettes?

A: To learn more about fire-safe cigarettes, visit the Fire Safe Cigarette Coalition’s website at www.firesafecigarettes.org.

Q: What do I need to register my Fire-Safe Cigarettes?

A: You need to log into your wv.gov account for your company to fill out the certification application. You will need to include a copy of product testing certification by an accredited laboratory for each brand family showing all styles listed (Ultras, Menthols, etc.), pictures (color copy or on CD) of carton artwork showing the FSC logo near the UPC code, and payment of \$1,000.00 per brand family that can be processed online. [Click here to login into your account.](#)

Q: How often do I need to recertify my cigarettes?

A: You need to recertify every 3 years.

Q: When did this law on Fire-Safe Cigarettes take place?

A: This law went into effect on July 2009. FSC legislation is Senate Bill 456, which you can download from the Legislature’s website. www.legis.state.wv.us/.

Q: What if my cigarettes are certified in another state already?

A: Although we recognize and accept approved testing from another state, we still require all documentation and fees.

Q: What if the name changed on a brand family of one of our cigarettes?

A: If you make a name change to any brand family previously certified by the State of WV, you must submit a letter stating what the name was and what it is now. There is NO additional fee for this.

Q: What if physical modifications are made to a brand family that was previously certified?

A: If you have made physical modifications to a brand family that was previously certified by the State of WV, those cigarettes must be retested, and you must resubmit the information on that brand family with a current report from Arista Laboratories (or whatever approved lab you use) showing that the new cigarettes meet the FSC standards. There is NO additional fee for this.

Q: What if we add a new brand family?

A: Even if you are previously certified, if you add a new brand family you must submit all documentation and fees for that brand family.