



Subject 48

July 31, 2009

TO: Subscribers to UL's Listing and Follow Up Service for Electric Signs (UXYT) and Other Interested Parties

SUBJECT: Proposed Revisions to UL Listing and Follow Up Service for Electric Signs

Underwriters Laboratories (UL) is requesting your comments on the following proposed changes to the UL Listing and Follow Up Service for Signs (UXYT), including the proposed effective date for implementation of those changes. The revised program is intended to cover all subscribers currently covered under the current General Coverage program for Electric Signs.

Rationale for Program Changes:

UL monitors all certification programs to assess their effectiveness in facilitating product compliance with applicable certification requirements. Some of the factors considered include changes in industry technology affecting construction, Follow Up Services audit results, comments from members of the inspection community, input and suggestions from product manufacturers and installers, and other similar sources of input and information concerning the effectiveness of the program. The result of UL's ongoing monitoring and field experience with the current sign certification program indicates that there is a need to update this General Coverage Program. These proposed changes are intended to assist manufacturers and UL in more effectively ensuring compliance of UL Listed signs with the applicable requirements of UL 48 Standard for Electric Signs.

The need to change and update the current sign certification program, based on the identified factors above, was discussed with a cross-section of sign manufacturers participating in UL's current General Coverage Program for Signs and with representatives of the sign manufacturers trade associations. Based on the input received, there was general acknowledgement of the need for program updates to address the issues identified.

Updated Sign Certification Program:

With direct input and recommendations from individual sign manufacturers and key sign trade associations, UL developed proposed enhancements to the current sign certification program. Those enhancements focus on fully utilizing the improved training resources now available, additional assessment tools, and additional auditing tools while maintaining the flexibility still needed by sign manufacturers to accommodate a wide variety of sign types and sizes. The following proposed program elements are intended to help ensure a consistent level of product compliance with UL 48 for all sign manufacturers participating in the UL sign certification program.

BASIC PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Manufacturer Options – To provide maximum flexibility for sign manufacturers who have different production needs and different sign types, the following options will be available for sign manufacturers under the updated sign certification program. Each option has specific features and requirements. The following is a brief description of each option, including the elements that are changes, enhancements, or updates from the current program.

OPTION 1

Overview – This option requires the following:

1. Manufacturer's Technical Representative (MTR) – The manufacturer will be required to identify at least one representative who will be required to complete the newly created UL on-line training curriculum covering the requirements for UL 48. While the manufacturer will continue to be responsible for maintaining compliance with the program requirements, it is anticipated that the MTR(s) will play an active role in helping the manufacturer meet the program requirements.

2. Evaluation by Conformity Assessment Services (CAS) – Representative samples of each basic model or family of models intended for UL Listing will be required to be submitted to Conformity Assessment Services (CAS) for engineering evaluation. If the signs are found to comply with the requirements of UL 48 a UL Procedure Report is prepared and issued by UL to serve as the Follow Up documentation and authorization to use the UL Listing Mark.

Program Audits - Quarterly follow up inspections would normally be required for this option assuming production compliance to the procedure report is maintained.

Changes from Current Program – Except for the new MTR requirement, this option is identical the current certification program applied to all sign manufacturers for signs that do not qualify under the general coverage program criteria.

OPTION 2

Overview – This option consists of the following:

1. Manufacturers Technical Representative (See Option 1)

2. Product Compliance Assessment Process – The sign manufacturer will be required to conduct a compliance assessment for each sign construction intended to bear the UL Listing Mark and to document the results in an established format that will be retained for UL audit. While most sign manufacturers currently have some type of assessment process, this enhancement will provide manufacturers with a consistent, streamlined framework for meeting this objective.

3. Product Documentation – In addition to the UL Label Log now required by the current General Coverage Program, additional product documentation will be required for all Listed signs or sign families under this option to help facilitate more effective auditing of product compliance with UL 48. The required documentation will include the following minimum elements:

- A. UL Label usage record (current label usage log)
- B. Model, part, or other unique product identifier.
- C. Product environmental and electrical ratings
- D. Description consisting of drawings, photos, or other similar material
- E. Parts list (parts and/or components subject to UL requirements)
- F. Copy of product markings
- G. Copy of installation instructions provided with sign
- H. Documentation of product compliance assessment results

Program Audits – Follow Up for this option will be based on the volume of production using the current frequency of inspection guidelines used in the General Coverage Program for Signs.

Changes from Current Program – While based on the principle of maximum sign construction flexibility now available in the current general coverage program for signs, this option introduces new requirements in process and record keeping. These new requirements are designed to maintain flexibility of the program while helping improve product compliance with the requirements of UL 48 Standard for Electric Signs.

OPTION 3

Overview and Changes from Current Program – This new option is identical to the enhanced General Coverage Program, or Option 2 above, except it additionally requires a manufacturer to have a demonstrated Quality Management System (QMS) verified and audited by UL.

Program Audits – Follow Up for this option will involve product, process and systems audits. During the initial audit phase for this option the audit frequency will be identical to Option 2. When manufacturers under this option demonstrate through audits that they have a functioning Management System containing the specific quality elements required for this option, they will be eligible for quarterly audits and consideration for additional reductions in audit frequencies depending on their ability to demonstrate consistent production control and compliance with UL 48 requirements.

SPECIAL NOTE

Sign manufacturers not participating in option 1-3 still may have individual signs evaluated by UL using the current UL Field Evaluation Program. Under this program UL field evaluation engineers do an onsite visit and conduct an evaluation of signs that are installed or being installed in the field to verify compliance with the requirements of UL 48 Standard for Electric Signs.

Proposed Implementation Effective Date:

Based on the need to provide sign manufacturers with adequate time to implement the program changes, UL is proposing that implementation of the program updates be accomplished with a 18 month effective date from the beginning of the announced implementation period.

Comments Due:

Comments on the proposed changes and implementation period are requested no later than 30 days from the date of this proposal bulletin.

If there are any questions concerning these requirements you may contact the undersigned.



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