



# Federal Trade Commission

## Protecting America's

Consumers

## LABELING AND ADVERTISING OF HOME INSULATION 16CFR460

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- Sec.
- 460.1 What this regulation does.
  - 460.2 What is home insulation.
  - 460.3 Who is covered.
  - 460.4 When the rules apply.
  - 460.5 R-value tests.
  - 460.6 "Representative thickness" testing.
  - 460.7 Which test version to use.
  - 460.8 R-value tolerances.
  - 460.9 What test records you must keep.
  - 460.10 How statements must be made.
  - 460.11 Rounding off R-values.
  - 460.12 Labels.
  - 460.13 Fact sheets.
  - 460.14 How retailers must handle fact sheets.
  - 460.15 How installers must handle fact sheets.
  - 460.16 What new home sellers must tell new homebuyers.
  - 460.17 What installers must tell their customers.
  - 460.18 Insulation ads.
  - 460.19 Savings claims.
  - 460.20 R-value per inch claims.
  - 460.21 Government claims.
  - 460.22 Tax claims.
  - 460.23 Other laws, rules, and orders.
  - 460.24 Stayed or invalid parts.
- [Appendix to Part 460--Exemptions](#)

Authority: 38 Stat. 717, as amended (15 U.S.C. 41 et seq.).

Source: 44 FR 50242, Aug. 27, 1979, unless otherwise noted.

### Sec. 460.1 What this regulation does.

This regulation deals with home insulation labels, fact sheets, ads, and other promotional materials in or affecting commerce, as "commerce" is defined in the Federal Trade Commission Act. If you are covered by this regulation, breaking any of its rules is an unfair and deceptive act or practice or an unfair method of competition under section 5 of that Act. You can be fined heavily (up to \$10,000 plus an adjustment for inflation, under Sec. 1.98 of this chapter) each time you break a rule.

[44 FR 50242, Aug. 27, 1979, as amended at 61 FR 54549, Oct. 21, 1996; 61 FR 55840, Oct. 29, 1996]

### Sec. 460.2 What is home insulation.

Insulation is any material mainly used to slow down heat flow. It may be mineral or organic, fibrous, cellular, or reflective (aluminum foil). It may be in rigid, semirigid, flexible, or loose-fill form. Home insulation is for use in old or new homes, condominiums, cooperatives, apartments, modular homes, or mobile homes. It does not include pipe insulation. It does not include any kind of duct insulation except for duct wrap.

### Sec. 460.3 Who is covered.

You are covered by this regulation if you are a member of the home insulation industry. This includes individuals, firms, partnerships, and corporations. It includes manufacturers, distributors, franchisors, installers, retailers, utility companies, and trade associations. Advertisers and advertising agencies are also covered. So are labs doing tests for industry members. If you sell new homes to consumers, you are covered.

### Sec. 460.4 When the rules apply.

You must follow these rules each time you import, manufacture, distribute, sell, install, promote, or label home insulation. You must follow them each time you prepare, approve, place, or pay for home insulation labels, fact sheets, ads, or other promotional materials for consumer use. You must also follow them each time you supply anyone covered by this regulation with written information that is to be used in labels, fact sheets, ads, or other promotional materials for consumer use. Testing labs must follow the rules unless the industry members tells them, in writing, that labels, fact

sheets, ads, or other promotional materials for home insulation will not be based on the test results.

#### Sec. 460.5 R-value tests.

R-value measures resistance to heat flow. R-values given in labels, fact sheets, ads, or other promotional materials must be based on tests done under the methods listed below. They were designed by the American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM). The test methods are:

- a. All types of insulation except aluminum foil must be tested with ASTM C 177-85 (Reapproved 1993), "Standard Test Method for Steady-State Heat Flux Measurements and Thermal Transmission Properties by Means of the Guarded-Hot-Plate Apparatus;" ASTM C 236-89 (Reapproved 1993), "Standard Test Method for Steady-State Thermal Performance of Building Assemblies by Means of a Guarded Hot Box;" ASTM C 518-91, "Standard Test Method for Steady-State Heat Flux Measurements and Thermal Transmission Properties by Means of the Heat Flow Meter Apparatus;" ASTM C 976-90, "Standard Test Method for Thermal Performance of Building Assemblies by Means of a Calibrated Hot Box;" or ASTM C 1114-95, "Standard Test Method for Steady-State Thermal Transmission Properties by Means of the Thin-Heater Apparatus." The tests must be done at a mean temperature of 75 deg.Fahrenheit. The tests must be done on the insulation material alone (excluding any airspace). R-values ("thermal resistance") based upon heat flux measurements according to ASTM C 177-85 (Reapproved 1993) or ASTM C 518-91 must be reported only in accordance with the requirements and restrictions of ASTM C 1045-90, "Standard Practice for Calculating Thermal Transmission Properties from Steady-State Heat Flux Measurements." These incorporations by reference were approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies of the test procedures and standard practice may be obtained from the American Society of Testing and Materials, 1916 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Copies may be inspected at the Federal Trade Commission, Consumer Response Center, Room 130, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20580, or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC.
  1. For polyurethane, polyisocyanurate, and extruded polystyrene, the tests must be done on samples that fully reflect the effect of aging on the product's R-value. To age the sample, follow the procedure in paragraph 4.6.4 of GSA Specification HH-I-530A, or another reliable procedure.
  2. For loose-fill cellulose, the tests must be done at the settled density determined under paragraph 8 of ASTM C 739-91, "Standard Specification for Cellulosic Fiber (Wood-Base) Loose-Fill Thermal Insulation." This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies of the test procedure may be obtained from the American Society of Testing and Materials, 1916 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Copies may be inspected at the Federal Trade Commission, Consumer Response Center, Room 130, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20580, or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC.
  3. For loose-fill mineral wool, the tests must be done on samples that fully reflect the effect of settling on the product's R-value. When a settled density procedure becomes part of a final GSA Specification for loose-fill mineral wool, the tests must be done at the settled density determined under the GSA Specification.
- b. Aluminum foil systems with more than one sheet must be tested with ASTM C 236-89 (Reapproved 1993) or ASTM C 976-90, which are incorporated by reference in paragraph (a) of this section. The tests must be done at a mean temperature of 75 deg.Fahrenheit, with a temperature differential of 30 deg.Fahrenheit.
- c. Single sheet systems of aluminum foil must be tested with ASTM E408 or another test method that provides comparable results. This tests the emissivity of the foil--its power to radiate heat. To get the R-value for a specific emissivity level, air space, and direction of heat flow, use the tables in the most recent edition of the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers' (ASHRAE) Handbook. You must use the R-value shown for 50 deg.Fahrenheit, with a temperature differential of 30 deg.Fahrenheit.
- d. For insulation materials with foil facings, you must test the R-value of the material alone (excluding any air spaces) under the methods listed in paragraph (a) of this section. You can also determine the R-value of the material in conjunction with an air space. You can use one of two methods to do this:
  1. You can test the system, with its air space, under ASTM C 236-89 (Reapproved 1993) or ASTM C 976-90, which are incorporated by reference in paragraph (a) of this section. If you do this, you must follow the rules in paragraph (a) of this section on temperature, aging and settled density.
  2. You can add up the tested R-value of the material and the R-value of the air space. To get the R-value for the air space, you must follow the rules in paragraph (c) of this section.

[44 FR 50242, Aug. 27, 1979, as amended at 55 FR 10055, Mar. 19, 1990; 55 FR 12110, Mar. 30, 1990; 61 FR 13665, Mar. 28, 1996; 63 FR 71587, Dec. 28, 1998]

#### Sec. 460.6 "Representative thickness" testing.

All tests except aluminum foil tests must be done at a representative thickness for every thickness shown in a label, fact sheet, ad, or other promotional material. "Representative thickness" means a thickness at which the R-value per unit will vary no more than plus or minus 2% with increases in thickness. However, if the thickness shown in your label, fact sheet, ad, or promotional material is less than the representative thickness, then you can test the insulation at the thickness shown.

#### Sec. 460.7 Which test version to use.

Use the version of the ASTM test method that was in effect when this regulation was promulgated. If ASTM changes a test method, the new version will automatically replace the old one in these rules 90 days after ASTM first publishes the change. However, the Commission's staff or a person affected by the change can petition the Commission during the 90-day period not to adopt the change or to reopen the proceeding to consider it further.

#### Sec. 460.8 R-value tolerances.

If you are an industry member, the R-value of any insulation you sell cannot be more than 10% below the R-value shown in a label, fact sheet, ad, or other promotional material for that insulation. However, if you are not a manufacturer, you can rely on the R-value data given to you by the manufacturer, unless you know or should know that the data is false or not based on the proper tests.

#### **Sec. 460.9 What test records you must keep.**

Manufacturers and testing labs must keep records of each item of information in the "Report" section of the ASTM test method that is used for a test. They must also keep the following records:

- a. The name and address of the testing lab that did each test.
- b. The date of each test.
- c. For manufacturers, the date each test report was received from a lab. For labs, the date each test report was sent to a manufacturer.
- d. For extruded polystyrene, polyurethane, and polyisocyanurate, the age (in days) of the specimen that was tested.
- e. For aluminum foil, the emissivity level that was found in the test.

Manufacturers who own their own testing labs need not keep records of the information in paragraph (c) of this section.

Keep these records for at least three years. If the documents show proof for your claims, the three years will begin again each time you make the claim. Federal Trade Commission staff members can check these records at any time, but they must give you reasonable notice first.

#### **Sec. 460.10 How statements must be made.**

All statements called for by this regulation must be made clearly and conspicuously. Among other things, you must follow the Commission's enforcement policy statement for clear and conspicuous disclosures in foreign language advertising and sales materials, 16 CFR 14.9.

[61 FR 13666, Mar. 28, 1996]

#### **Sec. 460.11 Rounding off R-values.**

R-values shown in labels, fact sheets, ads, or other promotional materials must be rounded to the nearest tenth. However, R-values of 10 or more may be rounded to the nearest whole number.

#### **Sec. 460.12 Labels.**

**If you are a manufacturer, you must label all packages of your insulation. The labels must contain:**

- a. The type of insulation.
- b. A chart showing these items:
  1. For mineral fiber batts and blankets: the R-value, length, width, thickness, and square feet of insulation in the package.
  2. For all loose-fill insulation except cellulose: The minimum thickness, maximum net coverage area, and minimum weight per square foot at R-values of 11, 19, and 22. You must also give this information for any additional R-values you list on the chart. Labels for these products must state the minimum net weight of the insulation in the package.
  3. For loose-fill cellulose insulation: the minimum thickness, maximum net coverage area, number of bags per 1,000 square feet, and minimum weight per square foot at R-values of 13, 19, 24, 32, and 40. You must also give this information for any additional R-values you list on the chart. Labels for this product must state the minimum net weight of the insulation in the package.
  4. For boardstock: the R-value, length, width, and thickness of the boards in the package, and the square feet of insulation in the package.
  5. For aluminum foil: the number of foil sheets; the number and thickness of the air spaces; and the R-value provided by that system when the direction of heat flow is up, down, and horizontal. You can show the R-value for only one direction of heat flow if you clearly and conspicuously state that the foil can only be used in that application.
  6. For insulation materials with foil facings, you must follow the rule that applies to the material itself. For example, if you manufacture boardstock with a foil facing, follow paragraph (b)(4) of this section. You can also show the R-value of the insulation when it is installed in conjunction with an air space. This is its "system R-value." If you do this, you must clearly and conspicuously state the conditions under which the system R-value can be attained.
  7. For air duct insulation: The R-value, length, width, thickness, and square feet of insulation in the package.
- c. The following statement: "R means resistance to heat flow. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulating power."
- d. If installation instructions are included on the label or with the package, add this statement: "To get the marked R-value, it is essential that this insulation be installed properly. If you do it yourself, follow the instructions carefully."
- e. If no instructions are included, add this statement: "To get the marked R-value, it is essential that this insulation be installed properly. If you do it yourself, get instructions and follow them carefully. Instructions do not come with this package."

#### **Sec. 460.13 Fact sheets.**

If you are a manufacturer, you must give retailers and installers fact sheets for the insulation products you sell to them. Each sheet must contain what is listed here. You can add any disclosures that are required by federal laws, regulations, rules, or orders. You can add any disclosures that are required by State or local laws, rules, and orders, unless they are inconsistent with the provisions of this regulation. Do not add anything else.

Each fact sheet must contain these items:

- a. The name and address of the manufacturer. It can also include a logo or other symbol that the manufacturer uses.

- b. A heading: "This is \_\_\_\_\_ insulation." Fill in the blank with the type and form of your insulation.
- c. The heading must be followed by a chart:
1. If Sec. 460.12(b) requires a chart for your product's label, you must use that chart. For foamed-in-place insulations, you must show the R-value of your product at 3 1/2 inches. You can also show R-values at other thicknesses.
  2. You can put the charts for similar products on the same fact sheet. For example, if you sell insulation boards or batts in three different thicknesses, you can put the label charts for all three products on one fact sheet. If you sell loose-fill insulation in two different bag sizes, you can put both coverage charts on one fact sheet, as long as you state which coverage chart applies to each bag size.
- d. For urea-based foam insulation, the chart must be followed by this paragraph:
- "Foam insulation shrinks after it is installed. This shrinkage may significantly reduce the R-value you get."
- However, you can lower your product's R-value to account for shrinkage. To do this, you must have reliable scientific proof of the extent of shrinkage for your product and of its effect on R-value. If you lower your product's R-value, you need not make the above statement.
- e. For air duct insulation, the chart must be followed by this statement:
- "The R-value of this insulation varies depending on how much it is compressed during installation."
- f. After the chart and any statement dealing with the specific type of insulation, ALL fact sheets must carry this statement, boxed, in 12-point type:

Read This Before You Buy

What You Should Know About R-values

The chart shows the R-value of this insulation. R means resistance to heat flow. The higher the R-value, the greater the insulating power. Compare insulation R-values before you buy. There are other factors to consider. The amount of insulation you need depends mainly on the climate you live in. Also, your fuel savings from insulation will depend upon the climate, the type and size of your house, the amount of insulation already in your house, and your fuel use patterns and family size. If you buy too much insulation, it will cost you more than what you'll save on fuel. To get the marked R-value, it is essential that this insulation be installed properly.

[44 FR 50242, Aug. 27, 1979, as amended at 45 FR 68928, Oct. 17, 1980]

**Sec. 460.14 How retailers must handle fact sheets.**

If you sell insulation to do-it-yourself customers, you must have fact sheets for the insulation products you sell. You must make the fact sheets available to your customers. You can decide how to do this, as long as your insulation customers are likely to notice them. For example, you can put them in a display, and let customers take copies of them. You can keep them in a binder at a counter or service desk, and have a sign telling customers where the fact sheets are.

**Sec. 460.15 How installers must handle fact sheets.**

If you are an installer, you must have fact sheets for the insulation products you sell. Before customers agree to buy insulation from you, you must show them the fact sheet(s) for the type(s) of insulation they want. You can decide how to do this. For example, you can give each customer a copy of the fact sheet(s). You can keep the fact sheets in a binder, and show customers the binder before they agree to buy.

**Sec. 460.16 What new home sellers must tell new home buyers.**

If you are a new home seller, you must put the following information in every sales contract: The type, thickness, and R-value of the insulation that will be installed in each part of the house. There is an exception to this rule. If the buyer signs a sales contract before you know what type of insulation will be put in the house, or if there is a change in the contract, you can give the buyer a receipt stating this information as soon as you find out.

**Sec. 460.17 What installers must tell their customers.**

If you are an installer, you must give your customers a contract or receipt for the insulation you install. For all insulation except loose-fill and aluminum foil, the receipt must show the coverage area, thickness, and R-value of the insulation you installed. For loose-fill, the receipt must show those three items plus the number of bags used. For aluminum foil, the receipt must show the number and thickness of the air spaces, the direction of heat flow, and the R-value. The receipt must be dated and signed by the installer. To figure out the R-value of the insulation, use the data that the manufacturer gives you. Do not multiply the R-value for one inch by the number of inches you installed.

If you put insulation in more than one part of the house, put the data for each part on the receipt. You can do this on one receipt, as long as you do not add up the coverage areas or R-values for different parts of the house.

**Sec. 460.18 Insulation ads.**

- a. If your ad gives an R-value, you must give the type of insulation and the thickness needed to get that R-value. Also, add this statement explaining R-values: "The higher the R-value, the greater the insulating power. Ask your seller for the fact sheet on R-values."
- b. If your ad gives a price, you must give the type of insulation, the R-value at a specific thickness, the statement explaining R-values in paragraph (a) of this section, and the coverage area for that thickness. If you give the price per square foot, you do not have to give the coverage area.

- c. If your ad gives the thickness of your insulation, you must give its R-value at that thickness and the statement explaining R-values in paragraph (a) of this section.
- d. If your ad compares one type of insulation to another, the comparison must be based on the same coverage areas. You must give the R-value at a specific thickness for each insulation, and the statement explaining R-values in paragraph (a) of this section. If you give the price of each insulation, you must also give the coverage area for the price and thickness shown. However, if you give the price per square foot, you do not have to give the coverage area.
- e. If your ad gives the R-value of urea-based foam insulation, you must add this statement: "Foam insulation shrinks after it is installed. This shrinkage may significantly reduce the R-value you get." However, you can lower your product's R-value to account for shrinkage. To do this, you must have reliable scientific proof of the extent of shrinkage for your product and of its effect on R-value. If you lower your product's R-value, you need not make the above statement.
- f. The affirmative disclosure requirements in Sec. 460.18 do not apply to ads on television.

[44 FR 50242, Aug. 27, 1979, as amended at 51 FR 39651, Oct. 30, 1986]

#### **Sec. 460.19 Savings claims.**

- a. If you say or imply in your ads, labels, or other promotional materials that insulation can cut fuel bills or fuel use, you must have a reasonable basis for the claim. For example, if you say that insulation can "slash" or "lower" fuel bills, or that insulation "saves money," you must have a reasonable basis for the claim. Also, if you say that insulation can "cut fuel use in half," or "lower fuel bills by 30%," you must have a reasonable basis for the claim.
- b. If you say or imply in your ads, labels, or other promotional materials that insulation can cut fuel bills or fuel use, you must make this statement about savings: "Savings vary. Find out why in the seller's fact sheet on R-values. Higher R-values mean greater insulating power."
- c. If you say or imply that a combination of products can cut fuel bills or use, you must have a reasonable basis for the claim. You must make the statement about savings in paragraph (b) of this section. Also, you must list the combination of products used. They may be two or more types of insulation; one or more types of insulation and one or more other insulating products, like storm windows or siding; or insulation for two or more parts of the house, like the attic and walls. You must say how much of the savings came from each product or location. If you cannot give exact or approximate figures, you must give a ranking. For instance, if your ad says that insulation and storm doors combined to cut fuel use by 50%, you must say which one saved more.
- d. If your ad or other promotional material is covered by Sec. 460.18 (a), (b), (c), or (d), and also makes a savings claim, you must follow the rules in Secs. 460.18 and 460.19. However, you need not make the statement explaining R-value in Sec. 460.18(a).
- e. Manufacturers are liable if they do not have a reasonable basis for their savings claims before the claim is made. If you are not a manufacturer, you are liable only if you know or should know that the manufacturer does not have a reasonable basis for the claim.
- f. Keep records of all data on savings claims for at least three years. For the records showing proof for claims, the three years will begin again each time you make the claim. Federal Trade Commission staff members can check these records at any time, but they must give you reasonable notice first.
- g. The affirmative disclosure requirements in Sec. 460.19 do not apply to ads on television.

[44 FR 50242, Aug. 27, 1979, as amended at 51 FR 39651, Oct. 30, 1986]

#### **Sec. 460.20 R-value per inch claims.**

In labels, fact sheets, ads, or other promotional materials, do not give the R-value for one inch or the "R-value per inch" of your product. There are two exceptions:

- a. You can do this if you suggest using your product at a one-inch thickness.
- b. You can do this if actual test results prove that the R-values per inch of your product does not drop as it gets thicker.

You can list a range of R-value per inch. If you do, you must say exactly how much the R-value drops with greater thickness. You must also add this statement: "The R-value per inch of this insulation varies with thickness. The thicker the insulation, the lower the R-value per inch."

#### **Sec. 460.21 Government claims.**

Do not say or imply that a government agency uses, certifies, recommends, or otherwise favors your product unless it is true. Do not say or imply that your insulation complies with a governmental standard or specification unless it is true.

#### **Sec. 460.22 Tax claims.**

Do not say or imply that your product qualifies for a tax benefit unless it is true.

#### **Sec. 460.23 Other laws, rules, and orders.**

- a. If an outstanding FTC Cease and Desist Order applies to you but differs from the rules given here, you can petition to amend to order.
- b. State and local laws and regulations that are inconsistent with, or frustrate the purposes of, the provisions of this regulation are preempted. However, a State or local government may petition the Commission, for good cause, to permit the enforcement of any part of a State or local law or regulation that would be preempted by this section.
- c. The Commission's three-day cooling-off rule stays in force.

#### **Sec. 460.24 Stayed or invalid parts.**

If any part of this regulation is stayed or held invalid, the rest of it will stay in force.

#### **Appendix to Part 460--Exemptions**

Section 18(g)(2) of the Federal Trade Commission Act, 15 U.S.C. 57a(g)(2), authorizes the Commission to exempt a person or class of persons from

all or part of a trade regulation rule if the Commission finds that application of the rule is not necessary to prevent the unfair or deceptive acts or practices to which the rule relates. In response to petitions from industry representatives, the Commission has granted exemptions from specific requirements of 16 CFR part 460 to certain classes of sellers. Some of these exemptions are conditioned upon the performance of alternative actions. The exemptions are limited to specific sections of part 460. All other requirements of part 460 apply to these sellers. The exemptions are summarized below. For an explanation of the scope and application of the exemptions, see the formal Commission decisions in the Federal Register cited at the end of each exemption.

- a. Manufacturers of perlite insulation products that have an inverse relationship between R-value and density or weight per square foot are exempted from the requirements in Secs. 460.12(b)(2) and 460.13(c)(1) that they disclose minimum weight per square foot for R-values listed on labels and fact sheets. This exemption is conditioned upon the alternative disclosure in labels and fact sheets of the maximum weight per square foot for each R-value required to be listed. 46 FR 22179 (1981).
- b. Manufacturers of rigid, flat-roof insulation products used in flat, built-up roofs are exempted from the requirements in Sec. 460.12 that they label these home insulation products. 46 FR 22180 (1981).
- c. New home sellers are exempted from:
  1. the requirement in Sec. 460.18(a) that they disclose the type and thickness of the insulation when they make a representation in an advertisement or other promotional material about the R-value of the insulation in a new home;
  2. the requirement that they disclose in an advertisement or other promotional material the R-value explanatory statement specified in Sec. 460.18(a) or the savings explanatory statement specified in Sec. 460.19(b), conditioned upon the new home sellers alternatively disclosing the appropriate explanatory statement in the sales contract along with the disclosures required by Sec. 460.16;
  3. the requirement that they make the disclosures specified in Sec. 460.19(c) if they claim that insulation, along with other products in a new home, will cut fuel bills or fuel use; and
  4. the requirement that they include the reference to fact sheets when they must disclose the R-value explanatory statement or the savings claim explanatory statement under Sec. 460.18(a) or Sec. 460.19(b), respectively.

The exemptions for new home sellers also apply to home insulation sellers other than new home sellers when they participate with a new home seller to advertise and promote the sale of new homes, provided that the primary thrust of the advertisement or other promotional material is the promotion of new homes, and not the promotion of the insulation product. 48 FR 31192 (1983).

[61 FR 13666, Mar. 28, 1996]