

## CSA – Canadian Standards Association

CSA is an independent not-for-profit membership-based association serving business, industry, government and consumers in Canada and the global marketplace with standards. So far, CSA has published over 1800 voluntary standards.

CSA works in Canada and around the world (European office is located in the Netherlands) to develop standards that address needs such as enhancing public safety and health, advancing the quality of life as well as helping to preserve the environment and facilitate trade.

For a foreign company to enter the Canadian market with their products it is important to investigate if their products fall into any of the categories the standards apply to. CSA-marks are recognized and accepted throughout America by federal, state and local authorities. Many Canadian retailers and distributors will refuse to deal with products that are not CSA approved, even if the CSA-standards, as stated, are voluntary.

CSA-marks can be compared to UL-marks (Underwriters Laboratories) in the US and CE-marking in Europe. However, even if your product has a CE-marking it might still need a CSA-mark to be sold in Canada. CSA also offers simultaneous UL-certification for some products, depending on the type of product.

CSA has standards for, and approve products, in the following categories (and more):

- Communications/information
- Construction products and materials
- Electrical/electronics
- Energy
- Environment
- Gas equipment
- Life sciences (such as health care, occupational health and safety, sports and recreation, aging and disabilities, mechanical and industrial equipment)
- Quality/business management

Standards are living documents that are continually revised and refreshed to address changing requirements and emerging technologies. Each standard is reviewed at least every five years.

The existing standards can be bought directly from the CSA standards online store ([www.shopcsa.ca](http://www.shopcsa.ca)). If your product fits into any of the existing standards, you will need to have it approved by a CSA representative. The approval process starts once you have received and accepted a quote from CSA. The next step is to provide CSA with samples for the required testing as stated in the quote. The approval time as well as the cost varies for each type of product depending on its complexity, but should typically not be longer than 3-5 months and cost no more than C\$10 000.

If your product does not fit into a standard, but falls under a product category for which standards are issued, there is the option of making an amendment to an existing standard as well as creating a new standard. Both these options involve time and costs for testing etc. The price for an amendment to an existing standard should be less than C\$10 000. The cost will be significantly higher and the time significantly longer if a new standard is to be created.

Does your company wish to do business in Canada but are not sure about the CSA-marking and the standards? The Swedish Trade Council in Toronto will be happy to assist you with the process of obtaining a CSA mark. Please do not hesitate to contact us by mail or phone.