

NAFTA - STANDARDS

WHAT'S IN THE AGREEMENT

The provisions on standards-related measures:

- ◆ Maintain Canada's high standards for health, safety and the environment;
- ◆ Ensure that standards and technical regulations are applied without discrimination to products and certain services of Canadian, Mexican and U.S. origin;
- ◆ Establish rules to prohibit standards, regulations and procedures from being used as unnecessary obstacles to trade;
- ◆ Require central governments to take "reasonable measures" to ensure state, provincial and local governments, as well as private standards organizations, comply with the NAFTA rules;
- ◆ Promote the use of international standards;
- ◆ Encourage agreements between governments and between private standards organizations for mutual acceptance of test results and certification procedures;
- ◆ Provide for a more open development and application of standards through further consultation among regulators and greater access to information on technical regulations; and
- ◆ Establish a Trilateral Committee to facilitate the raising of standards and compatibility among the three countries and act as a forum for consultation and co-operation.

BENEFITS FOR CANADA

- ◆ Canada's high standards will be preserved: each country has the right to maintain standards to achieve legitimate objectives, including environmental protection;
- ◆ More compatible standards will contribute to enhanced Canadian competitiveness by reducing the burden of compliance with different standards; and
- ◆ The NAFTA Standards Committee will be able to address technical standards problems before they become trade irritants, and act as a forum for continued enhancement of health, safety and environmental standards.