Product Certification
Frequently Asked Questions: ETL Listed Mark

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What is the difference between the UL and ETL Listed marks?

Both marks demonstrate compliance to the requirements of widely accepted product safety standards, as determined through independent testing by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL). As part of that testing regimen, the product manufacturer has agreed to periodic follow-up inspections to verify continued compliance.

The only real difference between these certification marks is in the quality of customer service and of the capabilities provided by the testing laboratory issuing them. At Intertek, our clients enjoy custom-tailored testing, quick turnarounds, and flexible work methods. We are literally changing the face of the industry by promoting an environment where the testing lab and product manufacturer work collaboratively. Together, we deliver products to market quicker, smoother, and more cost-effective than ever before.

Are manufacturers required to use UL for their compliance testing?

The simple answer is 'no.' In fact, this misconception has led many manufacturers to believe that they do not have a choice in their third-party testing partner.

The true legal requirement to satisfy the prerequisite of having your products tested by an independent organization is that the laboratory which performs your testing be an NRTL recognized by OSHA.

Intertek is recognized worldwide as a competent testing, inspection and certification organization, and our ETL Listed mark serves as proof of product compliance to U.S. standards.

Do local inspectors know the ETL mark?

Yes, inspectors and the Authorities Having Jurisdiction (AHJs) recognize, acknowledge, and accept the ETL mark as proof of product compliance. As Intertek is an NRTL recognized by OSHA, our ETL Listed Mark is an accepted alternative to UL throughout North America and in some areas of South America.

What does the ETL mark mean when displayed on my product?

- The ETL Listed mark indicates that your product has been tested by Intertek, found in compliance with accepted national standards, and meets the minimal requirements required for sale.
- To your distributors, retailers, and customers, the ETL Mark is assurance that the product is compliant with safety standards, having been tested and certified by a third-party organization.

What is an NRTL?

A Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL) is an independent laboratory recognized by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to test products to the specifications of applicable product safety standards – such as those from UL and other standards writing bodies. An NRTL's function is to provide independent evaluation, testing, and certification of any electrically operated product.

Intertek is recognized by Accreditation Bodies around the world:

- NRTL in the United States
- Testing Organization (TO) and Certifying Body (CB) in Canada
- Notified Body in Europe

What is the NRTL Program?

The NRTL Program is part of OSHA's Directorate of Technical Support, which seeks to ensure that products are safe for use in the U.S. workplace. The program recognizes the capabilities of private sector organizations to determine if specific products meet consensus safety standards.

OSHA safety standards are U.S. law and can be found in Title 29 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Specifically, the provisions for NRTL certification can be found within Part 1910 of the CFR (29 CFR Part 1910).

OSHA's recognition of an NRTL is not a grant of government authority, but rather an acknowledgment of the organization's ability to perform product safety testing and certification within the scope of its OSHA recognition. For more information, visit www.osha.gov.

What products bear the ETL mark?

Intertek provides a broad range of product safety testing and certification services for companies spanning multiple industries, markets, and applications.

For a comprehensive look at which products bear our mark, we invite you to look at our Directory of Listed Products online.

What countries accept the ETL mark?

The ETL Mark is an accepted demonstration of product compliance in both the United States and Canada.

However, it is important to note that through our scope of worldwide accreditations, Intertek is authorized to furnish the product safety marks required for international sale and distribution, including the NOM Mark, CE Mark, GS Mark, and S Mark, to name a few.

What should I tell my clients who aren't familiar with the ETL Listed mark?

There is no standard formula for better acquainting clients and customers with the ETL Listed Mark, though you can explain to them the true legal requirements behind third party product safety testing. It will alleviate their concerns to understand how our product safety certification program includes the same testing, listing, labeling, and follow-up inspection services as UL, and that we're accredited by the same organizations, agencies, and regulatory bodies.

Will retailers accept my product if it bears the ETL Listed mark?

Yes. ETL is an accepted and recognized demonstration of product compliance issued by Intertek. There is no reason why retailers should not accept products bearing the ETL Listed Mark, and any indication otherwise likely stems from misinformation in the marketplace.

Intertek has taken a leadership role in educating the industry on the legal requirements behind regulatory compliance. We continue to make great strides in helping manufacturers and retailers better understand their true responsibilities to the marketplace.

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