

Industry Circular



Internal Revenue Service
Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Division
Washington, D.C. 20224

Industry Circular No. 70-35

November 25, 1970

BEER METERS

Brewers and others concerned:

Purpose. This circular is issued to inform you about the notice of proposed rule making published in the Federal Register for November 21, 1970, which would amend the beer regulations, 26 CFR Part 245, with respect to beer meters.

Background. Industry Circular No. 68-31 discussed meter testing and encouraged brewers to make arrangements, subject to the approval by the Director, Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms Division, for meter tests by meter manufacturers, testing laboratories, or other testing authorities. Certain brewers have requested and received approval for such testing, and the results have been satisfactory. Consequently, we determined it would be feasible to discontinue the testing of brewers' beer meters by internal revenue officers and make the brewer responsible for maintenance of the accuracy and reliability of his meters.

Approval of testing procedures. The proposed regulations would require brewers to make arrangements for such tests, adjustments, and repairs as may be required to maintain meters in such a manner that they accurately and reliably measure and record beer metered for packaging and bottling. Also, under the proposed regulations, the frequency of meter tests, and the equipment used and procedures employed in testing meters, would be subject to approval by the assistant regional commissioner. The brewer would submit an application which would detail the method by which it is proposed to maintain the accuracy and reliability of each metering system to be used for the measurement of beer, and list the make, model, and serial number of each meter to be so used. If the assistant regional commissioner is satisfied as to the adequacy of the proposed method and, as applicable, the reliability of the testing authority, he will approve the application.

In anticipation that the proposed rule making will be adopted, it would be to your advantage to start making arrangements for the testing of your meters and having your test methods approved.

Meter tests. In developing your testing procedures, the controlling requirements for meter tests should be that the variation established by an approved test is not greater than 0.5% (plus or minus), that meters are tested at their normal operating rate of flow, and that this rate of flow is within the rate and accuracy limitation of the test equipment.

Generally, meters should be tested by the comparative volume method. However, comparative volume tests by use of a test meter would not necessarily be required. The comparison of the meter reading with a volume determined in an accurately calibrated (prover type) tank may, under proper conditions, provide an equally acceptable means of volumetric testing.

Comparative volume tests of high speed electronic meters might be conducted as infrequently as annually and be supplemented by more frequent electronic circuitry tests, while lower speed positive displacement meters should be tested at least once every three months unless experience has shown these meters maintain their accuracy for extended periods of time. Tests of electronic circuits, while basically similar, will vary as to specifics with various makes and models of turbine and magnetic meters. You may wish to consult with representatives of your meter manufacturer in connection with proposed tests of this nature.

Tests might be conducted by State, county, or local testing authorities; meter manufacturers; recognized testing laboratories; brewer's personnel capable of making meter tests and meter adjustments; and other persons. Your testing procedures should identify who will test your meters.

Inquiries. Your Assistant Regional Commissioner, Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, will be glad to advise you in respect of any questions or problems regarding the testing of meters and any other matter arising in respect of the proposed regulations. Any such inquiry should refer to this Industry Circular number.

Rex D. Davis

Rex D. Davis, Acting Director
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