



ALCOHOL STORAGE RULES HAVE CHANGED

Last week the Environmental Risk Management Authority (ERMA) issued a compliance guide reminding the trade of their obligations under the “Spirits and Fortified Wines” standard.

The advisory sets out the guidelines for safely storing and dispensing bulk wine and spirits. Any spirit (or fortified wine) stored in a container of more than 5 litres capacity (including “fill-your-own spirits”) is subject to the new rules. Spirits in single glass bottles are exempt.

So, if you’re a liquor retailer that stores 250 or more litres of spirits (or fortified wines) in bulk containers on your premises, you will need to obtain a location test certificate, which replaces the old Dangerous Goods Licence.

This new requirement is mandatory under the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (HSNO) Act, which came into force on 1 July 2006.

“The rules carried over from the Dangerous Goods legislation relates to safety concerns associated with storing and handling alcohol products in bulk quantities. For example, there are likely to be many outlets dispensing bulk wines and spirits from racks of industrial 20-litre plastic barrels, from a hole-in-the-wall device or from gravity fed tanks, all of which pose a potential fire and health hazard,” says Thomas Chin, chief executive of the Distilled Spirits Association.

The Association urges all bulk alcohol retailers to urgently check that they are compliant with the law to avoid potential insurance coverage issues, fines (of up to \$10,000) and to protect themselves, staff and the public from associated hazards.

[See: www.ermanz.govt.nz/hs/compliance/spirits.html.]

ENDS.
