



STANDARDS INFORMATION BULLETIN

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GNBS REGULARISING THE SALE OF CELL PHONES

Cellular phones are no longer considered a luxury but a necessity since they play a major role in our daily lives. Consequently, the demand for this product has significantly increased over the years, forcing suppliers to come up with new and innovative ways of satisfying consumers, while competing to increase market share.

As a result of the increase in the demand for cellular phones on the local market, some dealers have opted to sell used and refurbished phones to consumers as new phones. They have been changing the housings



and parts from one cell phone to the other, a practice which the Guyana National Bureau of Standards deems very unscrupulous.

The sale of used and refurbished phones as new has resulted in a significant increase in the number of consumer complaints received and investigated by the GNBS. Further, emanating from investigations conducted, it was revealed that dealers who are involved in unethical practices are often reluctant to administer adequate after sale services to consumers.

The GNBS recognizing the need to regularize the sale of cell phones to protect consumers has facilitated the development of a National Standard; **GYS 49: 2016, Requirements for cell phone dealers**. This Standard, took into consideration the nature of complaints made previously to the GNBS and addresses labelling

requirements as well as requirements pertaining to the after sale services which cell phones dealers must comply with.

Moreover, in order to facilitate the effective enforcement of the said standard, cell phone dealers are required to obtain a permit from the GNBS to sell cell phones. This facilitates compliance as permits are issued based on the satisfactory conformance with the requirements of the standard.

Additionally, Inspectors are now better equipped to examine cell phones to determine compliance with the following criteria emanating from the new standard:-

- Cell phones offered for sale should be labelled according to the latest version of the GNBS labelling standard, **GYS 9-1, Specification for the labelling of commodities-part 1: General principles**.
- Cell phones should also be labelled accordingly as **“Used”, “Refurbished” or “New”**.
- Cell phones offered for sale must be approved by the Federal Communications Commission.
- Cell phones must be sold with English manuals.
- Cell phones must be approved by the National Frequency Unit.

- Warranties conforming to the Consumer Affairs Act must be issued to consumers.

Likewise, consumers must be reminded of their responsibilities as well, which are to:-

- Ensure purchases are made from cell phone dealers who are registered with the GNBS. This can be verified by looking for the GNBS certificate (permit) which should be conspicuously posted in business places.
- Examine phones thoroughly to determine whether screws and the housings are without blemishes, since if attempts were made to open the phone, evidence of scratches and the flaking of the paint would be seen on screws.
- Ensure phones are authentic, by verifying the international mobile equipment identity (IMEI) number by imputing *#06#. The number displayed on screen must correspond with the number at the back of the phone; which can be seen by the removal of the battery.
- Ensure written warranties outlining the conditions for redress are collected.
- Ensure phones purchased are used in accordance with the user manuals.
- Ensure conditions of warranties are met before any claim is made.

This indispensable gadget helps for easy communication in our everyday lives and serves to be a welcome breakthrough in technology. However, consumers still need to exercise good purchasing practices and care in order to wisely spend their hard earned money. Dealers on the other hand need to develop good and ethical marketing and sales strategies to meet customer needs and to remain competitive. The GNBS would continue to fulfill its mandate of consumer protection by ensuring dealers operate within the confines of this standard.



This collective approach would serve to reduce complaints, as consumers would be guaranteed quality products and a level playing field would be created for all businesses to operate.

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