



What Every Jewellery Dealer Needs to Know...

about

The Precious Metals Marking Act and Regulations

The *Precious Metals Marking Act* prescribes uniform methods of marking precious metal articles made in whole or in part of gold, silver, platinum and palladium and prohibits markings that do not truly and correctly indicate the quality of the precious metal content. The Act establishes the legal definitions for the symbols and terms used to indicate the quality of jewellery and other articles made of precious metals. The Competition Bureau administers and enforces the *Precious Metals Marking Act* and its *Regulations* by:

- monitoring the marketplace to help ensure that the information provided to consumers regarding the quality of a precious metal article is not misleading or deceptive, and
- promoting uniformity in the markings and terminology used to describe precious metal articles made in whole or in part of gold, silver, platinum or palladium.

Quality Mark and Trade-mark Requirements

Where a quality mark such as "14K" for a gold alloy or ".925" for sterling silver has been applied to a precious metal article:

- the quality mark must truly and correctly indicate the quality of the precious metal article;
- the quality mark must be a mark prescribed by the regulations; and
- the article must also bear a trade-mark that has been applied for, or registered with the Registrar of Trade-marks in Canada.

The trade-mark is not required if the article has been quality marked in a foreign country and bears a government assay mark which is recognized by the Competition Bureau.

An article that has been stamped, branded, engraved or imprinted with a quality mark must bear a trade-mark that is applied in the same manner.

For information on Trade-marks, contact the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO) at (819) 997-1936, or 1-900-565-CIPO (\$3.00 flat rate per call), by fax at (819) 953-7620, or by e-mail at cipo.contact@ic.gc.ca. or visit their Web site at www.cipo.gc.ca.

Quality Marks applied to an article

A quality mark may be applied to a precious metal article by any method (e.g. by stamping or engraving, or by using a hang tag, sticker, card, overhead sign or label on a display case etc.)

The quality of gold may be expressed in karats or decimals. The minimum allowable quality for gold is 9K. Gold articles having a quality of 9K, 10K, 14K, 18K, 22K may alternatively be marked as .375, .417, .583, .750 and .916.

The minimum allowable quality for silver is 925. Acceptable quality marks include "sterling," "silver," "sterling silver," "SS," "argent," "argent sterling" and ".925".

The Importance of Quality Control

It is an offence to sell, offer for sale, expose for sale or have in possession for sale, import into Canada or advertise any precious metal article in a manner which is false or misleading with respect to the precious metal content of the article.

Whether you are a manufacturer, an importer or a retailer, you are responsible for ensuring that the precious metal articles you sell comply with the requirements.

Get in touch with us

The Competition Bureau is an independent law enforcement agency that ensures all Canadians enjoy the benefits of a competitive economy. The Bureau oversees the application of the *Competition Act*, the *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act*, the *Textile Labelling Act* and the *Precious Metals Marking Act*. To obtain information about these statutes, please contact the Competition Bureau's Information Centre at:

Address	Telephone	
Information Centre	Toll free:	1-800-348-5358
Competition Bureau	National Capital Region:	(819) 997-4282
50 Victoria Street	TDD (for hearing impaired):	1-800-642-3844
Hull, Quebec	Facsimile	(819) 997-0324
K1A 0C9	Web site	www.competition.ic.gc.ca
	E-mail	compbureau@ic.gc.ca

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This publication is only a guide. It provides basic information about the *Precious Metals Marking Act* and its *Regulations*. For further information, you should refer to the full text of the legislation or contact the Competition Bureau at one of the numbers listed above.