Important Update for 3-A Symbol or Certificate Licensees

*** Please Read and Share ***

For Licensees with Resellers

One of the most important provisions of the License Agreement your company signed to use the 3-A Symbol (or a Certificate) prohibits the transfer of the 3-A Symbol authorization or the assignment of the rights of use to any other party without the written consent of 3-A SSI. We bring this to your attention due to several recent incidents where an unlicensed third party has made claims of 3-A Symbol authorization or made actual use of the 3-A Symbol.

Why is this requirement part of the 3-A SSI license agreement?

First, it helps protect the interests of all licensees by preventing unknown third parties from misappropriating the display of the 3-A Symbol or making equivalent claims. Prospective customers, regulatory sanitarians, and others rely on the 3-A SSI database of authorized licensees to confirm that a company has met all requirements for licensing, including the Third Party Verification (TPV) inspection.

The unauthorized display of the 3-A Symbol or use of unsupported claims weakens the integrity of the entire program. While 3-A SSI has stepped up the oversight of 3-A Symbol displays and claims, internet marketing is pervasive and it changes rapidly. We encourage equipment customers and others to monitor and report false claims, because these are potential public health hazards, not just simple infringements.

How can a reseller market products with a 3-A Symbol authorization?

There are two basic options here. First, the License Agreement includes specific requirements for the use of the 3-A Symbol on specific products or in related marketing (off product) displays. A reseller may show the authorized products but only if the name of the license holder is displayed with the product and any reference to 3-A Symbol authorization is made in relation only to the equipment that is licensed. This allows the reader to know the identity of the license holder for proper verification.

A second option is for the reseller to obtain authorization to use and display the 3-A Symbol. By becoming a licensee, the reseller will have a listing in the 3-A SSI database and can be properly verified by customers. The reseller must meet all of the conditions for licensing. We recommend that your company or your reseller consult your Certified Conformance Evaluator (CCE) for more information.

Please visit the 3-A SSI website to view and download a copy of the 3-A License Agreement or a Quickguide to applying for a 3-A Authorization.

Update on 3-A SSI Action to Prevent Counterfeits

The U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC) announced it will institute an investigation of certain food processing equipment and packaging materials based on a complaint filed by 3-A SSI on June 3, 2019. The 3-A SSI complaint requests that the USITC issue an exclusion order against food processing equipment imported from China into the United States that bears a counterfeit 3-A Symbol, or such products that have falsely advertised that they meet 3-A Sanitary Standards. See recent news from 3-A SSI at http://www.3-a.org/Admin/Announcements for a complete copy of the announcement.
This complaint reflects more than two years of preparation by 3-A SSI, and the USITC review is the most significant official government action obtained by 3-A SSI to help protect the integrity of the 3-A Symbol program. More information on the investigation will be announced later this summer.

Please contact 3-A SSI at (703)790-0295 or 3-AINFO@3-A.org if you have questions or concerns about these subjects.

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