
U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION



Office of Compliance

Requirements¹ for Carpets and Rugs

16 C.F.R. Parts 1630 and 1631

What is the purpose of the carpet and rug standards?

These standards reduce the risks of death, personal injury, and property damage associated with fires that result from the ignition of carpets and rugs. The standards provide a test to determine the surface flammability of carpets and rugs when exposed to a small ignition source.

Where can I find the requirements for the surface flammability of carpets and rugs?

The Standard for the Surface Flammability of Carpet and Rugs can be found at 16 C.F.R. Part 1630. The Standard for the Surface Flammability of Small Carpet and Rugs can be found at 16 C.F.R. Part 1631. You can obtain a copy of the flammability standards from CPSC's Web Site at: <http://www.cpsc.gov>

What is a carpet or rug?

- (1) A carpet or rug (large) is a finished fabric or similar product intended to be used as a floor covering and has dimensions of over 6 feet long and an area greater than 24 ft². This definition also includes "carpet squares" intended to be installed in dimensions of over 6 feet long and an area greater than 24 ft². This definition excludes resilient floor coverings such as linoleum and vinyl tile.
- (2) A small carpet or rug is the same as the definition above but has **no** dimension over 6 feet long and an area not greater than 24 ft².

What are the requirements for carpets and rugs?

All carpets and rugs manufactured, imported or sold in the United States must meet the flammability (acceptance) criterion of the standards. Small carpets and rugs not meeting the

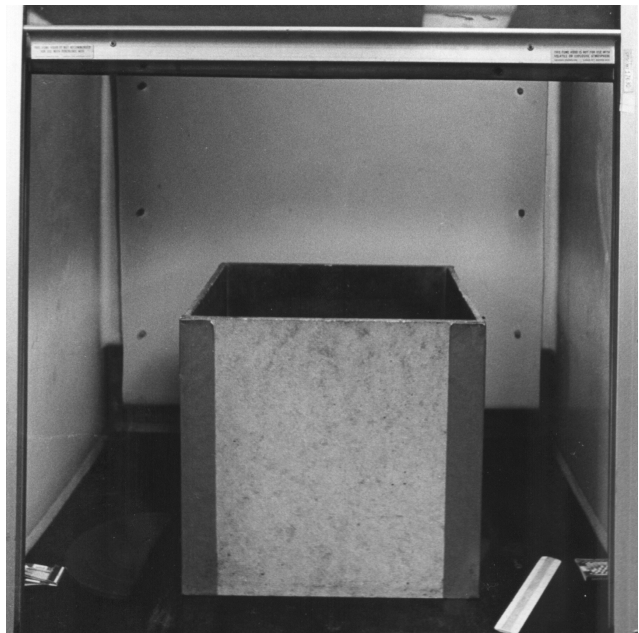
standard may be manufactured, imported or sold in the United States provided they are permanently labeled with the following statement: FLAMMABLE (FAILS U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE STANDARD FF 2-70): SHOULD NOT BE USED NEAR SOURCES OF IGNITION.

How do you test for surface flammability?

This test consists of exposing eight 9" x 9" conditioned specimens to a timed burning tablet in a specified test chamber.

The apparatus and test materials required to conduct the test are specified in 16 C.F.R. 1630.4(a) and 1631.4(a).

In summary, each specimen is placed in the center of the floor of the test chamber, traffic side up. Place the flattening frame on the specimen and position a methenamine timed burning tablet on one of its flat sides in the center of the 8"



¹ The following is a general unofficial summary of the requirements for the flammability of carpets and rugs and does not replace the requirements published in 16 C.F.R. 1630 and 1631. This summary does not include all of the details included in those requirements. For those details, please refer to the regulation or contact the Office of Compliance.

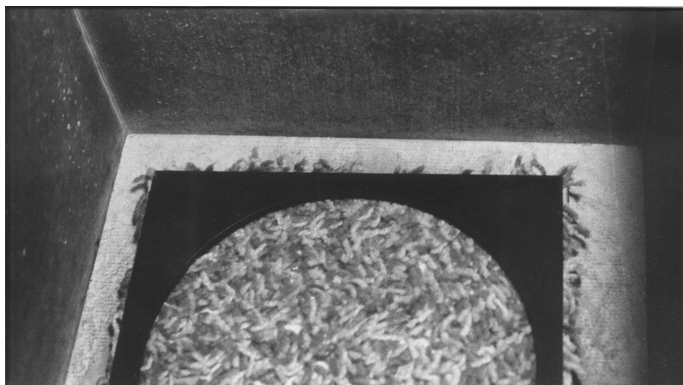
flattening frame hole. Ignite the top of the tablet by touching it with a lighted match, lighter, or other equivalent flame source. Allow test to continue until:

- (1) all flames and glowing disappear, or
- (2) the flaming or smoldering has gone to within 1" of the flattening frame.

What is the test criterion and acceptance criterion?

A single specimen meets the *test criterion* if the charred portion of the tested specimen is not within 1.0" of the edge of the hole in the flattening frame.

Acceptance criterion – at least 7 of the 8 replicate specimens of a given carpet and rug must meet the individual specimen *test criterion* in order to conform to this standard.



Are there any requirements for labeling?

Yes, if the carpet or rug has had a fire-retardant treatment or is made of fibers that have had a fire-retardant treatment, it must be labeled with the letter "T". The letter "T" should be legible and conspicuous on the label and/or invoice or other paper related to the carpet and rug, if commercially installed.

Small carpets and rugs not meeting the acceptance criterion of the standard must be permanently labeled with the following statement:

FLAMMABLE (FAILS U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE STANDARD FF 2-70): SHOULD NOT BE USED NEAR SOURCES OF IGNITION.

Are there any special requirements for some types of carpets and rugs?

Yes, carpets and rugs treated with a fire retardant or made from fire retardant materials are to be

washed or laundered 10 times using the methods required in the standard.

The laundering requirement for large carpets and rugs that use alumina trihydrate, a fire-retardant, in adhesives, foams, or latexes in carpet backings or elsewhere in the backings is currently suspended.

Shearling or hide carpets and rugs that consist of natural wool or hair attached to the hide with no synthetic fibers and have been treated with a fire-retardant may use an alternative wash procedure as specified in the standards at 16 C.F.R. 1630.61 or 16 C.F.R. 1631.61. Shearling and hide carpets and rugs utilizing this alternative procedure must also be labeled with a conspicuous, legible and permanent label containing the statements in 16 C.F.R. 1630.61(c) or 16 C.F.R. 1631.61(c).

Wool flokati carpets and rugs may use an alternative wash procedure as specified in the standard at 16 C.F.R. 1630.62 or 16 C.F.R. 1631.62. Wool flokati carpets and rugs utilizing this alternative procedure must also be labeled with a conspicuous, legible and permanent label containing the statements at 16 C.F.R. 1630.62(c) or 16 C.F.R. 1631.62(c).

What are the requirements for issuing a guaranty to a retailer or distributor?

Reasonable and representative tests must be conducted to issue a guaranty to a retailer or distributor. Each line/style of carpets or rugs (that are identical in all respects including such things as dye class, dyestuff and dying application method) must have at least one test conducted at the beginning of production, importation, or receipt of the first 25,000 linear yards and one test for every additional 50,000 linear yards.

If a guaranty is issued, the person issuing the guaranty must maintain specific records to support the guaranty as described in 16 C.F.R. 1630.31(g) or 16 C.F.R. 1631.31(g).

Where can I find additional information?

For more information on the standards, contact the Consumer Product Safety Commission, Office of Compliance, Washington, D.C. 20207, telephone: (301) 504-0608, <mailto:sect15@cpsc.gov>.