

Business Information

Metrication – Non-foods

How it affects your business

Since 1st January 2000 all goods which are weighed or measured must be in metric. All goods that are pre-packed by weight or measurement must be in metric. All goods that are sold loose from bulk must also be in metric.

All types of non-foods are affected by this legislation when sold by weight, volume, length or area.

| Metric | Examples |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Metre (m) Centimetre (cm) Millimetre (mm) | Fabric, wood, ribbon |
| Square metre (m ²) Square Centimetre (cm ²) Square Millimetre (mm ²) | Carpet, turf |
| Litre (l) Centilitre (cl) Millilitre (ml) | Petrol, paraffin, maggots |
| Kilogram (kg) Gram (g) | Nails, animal feed, fertiliser |

The changes do not apply to goods where an imperial unit is used only as a description - for example, a 3-foot wide bed or a 2-inch paintbrush. These goods are sold as individual units, not by weight or measurement.

What you should do?

1. Make sure that any weighing or measuring equipment you use is calibrated in metric quantities. Equipment can show both metric and imperial units as long as the imperial units are not more prominent than the metric.

Please turn over...

What you should do? (continued)...

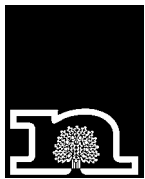
Anything which cannot be re-calibrated must be replaced – e.g. a yardstick.

2. The person who converts your scales to weigh in metric quantities should notify the Trading Standards Service when it has been done.

It is in your interest to make sure this is done, as un-notified conversions are liable to rejection on inspection.

3. Make sure that any signs or labels you use show metric units. Imperial units can still be shown as long as they are not more prominent than the metric.
4. You will need to recalculate your prices – e.g. a metre of fabric will be more expensive than a yard.
5. If you pre-pack goods (non-foods) you can choose the sizes/weights yourself as long as they are metric – the only exception is coal.

This leaflet is a brief summary of the weights and measures legislation affecting your business. It is not an authoritative document on the law and is only intended for guidance. For further details or clarification contact the Trading Standards Service.



Contacting us

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This information can be made available
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For further information please contact
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