



ADVERTISING STANDARDS CANADA (ASC) BACKGROUNDER

The *Canadian Code of Advertising Standards* and the *Consumer Complaint Procedure*

- ASC administers the *Canadian Code of Advertising Standards (Code)*, Canada's principal instrument of advertising self-regulation. (Copy enclosed.) First published in 1963, the *Code* is regularly updated.
- The *Code's* 14 clauses, along with *Code Interpretation Guidelines*, help ensure that Canadian advertising in all media is truthful, fair, and accurate.
- ASC responds to consumers' complaints about advertisements under the *Code's Consumer Complaint Procedure*.
- Complaints are adjudicated by independent, volunteer Consumer Response Councils that include senior industry and public representatives.
- Upheld complaints are published in quarterly ASC's *Ad Complaints Reports* (adstandards.com).

ASC Clearance Services

- At industry request, ASC reviews advertising copy in five regulated categories, including broadcast advertising for food and non-alcoholic beverages and children's commercials.
- Children's food broadcast advertising is the only category of advertising that is subject to two separate approvals.
 - First, ASC evaluates food broadcast advertising copy to ensure compliance with the Canadian government's Food and Drugs Act and Regulations.
 - Then, ASC's Children's Clearance Committee, including parent representatives, reviews these commercials to ensure compliance with the Canadian Association of Broadcasters' *Broadcast Code for Advertising to Children*. (Copy enclosed.) Adherence to this code is a CRTC condition of broadcast license.
 - Approved commercials are assigned approval numbers. Canadian broadcasters look for evidence of approval before airing these children's commercials.

New Today

- To **strengthen** the *Canadian Code of Advertising Standards* (Clause 12 – Advertising to Children) and the *Broadcast Code for Advertising to Children* (Clause 11 – Social Values), published today and effective September 2007, new **principles** have been added in the form of *Interpretation Guidelines*.
 - These *Interpretation Guidelines* encompass **healthy child development** and **appropriate food and beverage consumption**. These will help ensure that advertising to children encourages responsible product use, and that the amount of food shown being consumed does not exceed an appropriate single serving size.
- ASC Clearance Services will offer **advertising review services** for **children's advertising in print, Internet, and other non-broadcast media** – also beginning September 2007.
- To **ensure accountability and transparency** of the Canadian Children's Food & Beverage Advertising Initiative, ASC will **publish the commitments** made by each participating advertiser, **audit its compliance** with its commitment, and **publicly report** on the results.

Advertising Standards Canada is the national not-for-profit advertising industry self-regulatory body committed to creating and maintaining community confidence in advertising. ASC members include leading advertisers, advertising agencies, media organizations, and suppliers to the advertising sector.

For more information, contact:

Janet Feasby, Vice President, Standards
Advertising Standards Canada
416-961-6311 x 243, janet.feasby@adstandards.com

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