The regulations, which make the Standard part of the law, also include some changes and additions to the Standard. The Standard explains how to work out the correct care instructions for textiles.

The regulations can be bought from bookshops that sell legislation and from publishers:

GP Legislation
PO Box 12-418
WELLINGTON
Ph: (04) 496-5655
Fax: (04) 496-5698

Business people should note that the standards are very detailed. This booklet sets out the Commission’s interpretation of them, and of the issues that have arisen during enforcement of the standard. It should be used in conjunction with the appropriate Standards and regulations.

The Purpose of the Standard

The purpose of the standard is to ensure that consumers, drycleaners and anyone else who cleans textiles has information about the appropriate care procedures so that:

♦ Consumers will be aware of the method and cost of caring for products when buying them.
♦ The appropriate care treatment can be confidently used.
♦ The life of the textile is not shortened.
♦ Textiles are not damaged or destroyed by inappropriate care.

What Goods are Covered?

The following goods need to comply with the care labelling standard:

♦ Clothing.
♦ Household textiles.
♦ Furnishings.
♦ Upholstered furniture.
♦ Bedding.
♦ Mattresses.
♦ Bed bases.
♦ Piece goods and yarns made from textiles.
♦ Plastics.
♦ Plastic-coated fabrics.
- Suede, skins, hides, grain leathers and furs.

The following goods are excluded from the standard:

- Second hand goods

- Men’s, women’s, children’s and infant’s wear – unsupported coats (including overcoats and jackets) of PVC film, handkerchiefs, braces, suspenders, armbands, belts and headwear.

- Footwear – footwear (other than hosiery) and textile materials used in the manufacture of footwear.

- Drapery – floor cloths, dish cloths, dusters, cleaning cloths and pressing cloths.

- Haberdashery – ornaments, artificial flowers, sewing and embroidery threads, maternity inset panels, bust improvers and bra pads, and replacement pockets.

- Furnishings – upholstered furniture frame and mechanism covers and linings, oil baize, window blinds, sun blinds, awnings, carpets and other floor coverings, light fittings and lampshades, tapestries and wall hangings, ornaments, handicraft items, draught excluders, non-upholstered furniture, cushions and cushion covers manufactured from remnants and labelled by the manufacturer with the following disclaimer ‘cushion covers manufactured from remnants, care treatment unknown’.

- Jute Products – all jute products.

- Medical and Surgical goods – goods intended for medical or surgical use as bandages, dressings, sanitary pads, or materials forming part of manufactured medical and surgical goods.

- Canvas Goods – beach and garden umbrella coverings.

- Miscellaneous Goods – cords, twines, lashings, garden hose, toys, umbrellas and parasols, shoelaces, woven labels, flex coverings, sporting goods used only for the purpose of sport (other than apparel), articles intended for one time use only, mops, basket hangers, shoe holders, remnants, industrial gloves, regalia, polypropylene webbing for furniture, bags and cases (including handbags, purses, wallets, travel bags, sports bags, briefcases and wash bags).
How do you Decide on the Appropriate Label

Care instructions must be appropriate so that garments can be cleaned without damage. NZS 8722-1988 gives examples of appropriate care labels. However, other phrases can be used as long as they accurately describe the appropriate way to clean the article.

The care label should cover:

♦ General cleaning instructions for the textile including, where appropriate:
  - General instructions and warnings.
  - Washing.
  - Drying.
  - Ironing.
  - Drycleaning.

♦ How to maintain the textile, if necessary (e.g. air regularly).

♦ Warnings against inappropriate treatment (e.g. do not tumble dry).

The care label also needs to take into account any special treatment required for the trims.

Businesses need to be familiar with both NZS 8722-1988 and AS 2392-1990. As a guide, the correct care instructions for a textile depend on:

♦ The fibre used.

♦ The construction and potential for shrinkage of the fabric (e.g. knit).

♦ The colour-fastness of the fabric.

♦ Any special treatments applied (e.g. fire retardants) or likely to be applied (e.g. waterproofing).

♦ The design of the article (e.g. heat sensitivity, colour-fastness of trims).

♦ The normal care of the article (e.g. dryclean only is not appropriate for a polyester/cotton school shirt).

NZS 8722-1988 sets out a flow chart on how to work out the appropriate care instruction. The following example sets out the steps you need to follow.
Example:

Man’s jumper, fibre content 70% silk, 30% cotton.

1. The first step is to describe the garment by its end use, fabric and fibre type.

   End use: Jumper  
   Fabric: Knit  
   Fibre: 70% silk, 30% cotton

2. Refer to the Product End-Use Index in NZS 8722-1988.

   Look up jumper in the tables, under outerwear. Read across the table for the recommended treatment, in this case laundering or dry cleaning. Then refer across to the final column in the table for the reference table for detailed care instructions, which in this case is table one.

3. Refer to table one.

   You need to look up the care instructions for both silk and cotton.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Cotton</th>
<th>Silk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Washing Temperature</td>
<td>60 °C</td>
<td>40 °C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bleaching</td>
<td>May be chlorine bleached</td>
<td>Prohibited treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ironing</td>
<td>Hot</td>
<td>Warm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drycleaning</td>
<td>Drycleanable (P)</td>
<td>Drycleanable (P)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drying</td>
<td>No prohibitions</td>
<td>No prohibitions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As silk is the more delicate fibre, the care instructions to use on the jumper are those for silk.

4. The standard sets out tests for checking colour fastness, stretching, shrinking and other changes which might occur. However, it suggests that where test facilities are not available, the article should be cleaned according to the suggested care instructions and then be compared to a similar product of the same size and colour which has not been cleaned.
If the jumper passes the tests and so is clean and fit for the purpose for which it was designed and manufactured, then NZS 8721-1988 says it should be labelled:

- Warm Hand Wash
- Do not Bleach
- Warm Iron
- Drycleanable (P)

If the jumper fails the test then you need to either:

- Carry out further testing until a less severe care treatment can be decided on that leaves it clean and fit for the purpose for which it was designed and manufactured or,

- State a prohibited treatment or warning phrase such as ‘Dry Flat in Shade’.

In this example, where the fabric is a knit, it is likely that an extra instruction will be needed to ensure the jumper does not stretch when cleaned.

For made up garments both laundering and drycleaning treatments should be described on the label. The instructions should be given on the same side of the label.

When no specific or prohibited drying instruction is required, that is, the garment can be line dried, tumble dried etc, then no drying instruction is required. An example of a specific drying instruction is ‘dry flat away from direct sunlight’. An example of a prohibited drying instruction is ‘do not tumble dry’.

Where no specific or prohibited ironing instruction is required, that is, the garment can be ironed with a hot or cool iron, or steam ironed etc, then no ironing instruction is required. An example of a prohibited ironing instruction is ‘do not iron trim’.

Where an article is not colourfast, the label must state this.

It must also state if the fabric shrinks to an extent where the customer may have to buy a different size to allow for shrinkage.

**The Label**

**Permanent** – The care instructions must be on a permanent label. The standard defines permanent as meaning:
A label which will withstand the cleaning instructions given for the article to which it is attached and which will remain legible and attached to the article throughout its useful life.

Accessible – The care label must be accessible to customers. Where this is not possible because of the way the textiles are displayed or packaged, then, in addition to the permanent label, the care instructions must also be on at least one of:

♦ A removable ticket or label which is attached to the product.
♦ A pamphlet accompanying the product.
♦ The wrapper or package that the product is sold in.

Lettering – The wording on the label must be in English. The lettering must be:

♦ Legible.
♦ Medium width.
♦ Not less than 1.5 mm high.

Two Piece Garments – For garments that normally would not be drycleaned, that include more than one piece and where the instructions for both pieces are the same (for example, pyjamas), only one piece requires a care label.

For garments that can be drycleaned and that include more than one piece (for example a suit), all pieces require care labels.

For garments that consist of more than one piece and the care instructions are different for each piece, each piece must have a care label.

Position of Label – The standard notes that an Australian standard, AS 2392-1990 gives guidance on the positioning of labels. However, most garments should be labelled at the top centre back of the garment or in the left side seam adjacent to the hem.

Garments that Require Non-Permanent Care Labels

Some goods do not need a permanent label. However, these goods still require care instructions. They must be on at least one of:

♦ A removable ticket or label which is attached to the product.
♦ A pamphlet accompanying the product.
♦ A label on the wrapper or package that the product is sold in.

The following items do not need a permanent care label:

♦ Men’s and Boy’s wear – collars, gloves, mittens, all types of hosiery, incontinence garments, reversible jackets and fur garments.
Women’s and Girl’s wear – collars, neckwear, gloves, mittens, all types of hosiery, incontinence garments, reversible jackets, fur garments and shawls.

Baby wear – gloves, mittens, bibs, washable nappies, squares of flannelette, terry towelling or muslin, baby pilchers and fur garments.

Drapery – face washers, serviettes, doilies, tablecloths, tray cloths, centres, runners, duchess sets, mosquito netting and covers made therefrom, butter muslin and gauze, tea towels, place mats, pot holders, finger tips, appliance covers for teapots, toasters and similar articles.

Haberdashery – elastic, elastic threads, ribbons, zips, iron-on binding patches or trim, velcro type fasteners and curtain making kits.

Piece goods – trim.

Furnishings – shower curtains.

Miscellaneous – gardening gloves.

Labelling of Piece Goods

Care instructions need to be provided by the supplier, for the consumer, in one of the following ways:

♦ On a label intended for the manufacturer or consumer to sew into the finished garment.

♦ On a ticket attached to each roll of material.

♦ In a pamphlet.

Manufacturers should, where possible, incorporate care instructions onto the selvedge.

Labelling of Yarns and Textiles

Labelling of Yarns and Textiles Supplied for Further Processing - Care instructions for yarns and textiles supplied for further processing need to be provided by the supplier in one of the following ways:

♦ On a label intended for the manufacturer or consumer to sew into the finished garment or made-up article.

♦ On a ticket attached to each roll of material.
♦ In a pamphlet or other documentation attached to or supplied with the product.

Labelling of Yarns and Other Textile Materials – For textiles covered by the standard, a care label needs to be supplied by a ticket or band fixed to the skein, ball or other material.

What Other Labels are Required?

The following clothing and textiles must also comply with other product safety or consumer information standards:

♦ Children’s night clothes require country of origin and fire warning labels.

♦ Other clothing requires fibre content and country of origin labelling.

♦ Textiles – most textiles require labels.

Pamphlets on the other consumer information and product safety standards are available from the Commission.

Issues to Look out for

Symbols – Symbols, by themselves, are not acceptable under the standard. Care instructions must be in words. The Commission is still coming across garments with either no care labelling or just symbols.

English – The care labelling must be in English. The Commission has found garments labelled in other languages.

Appropriate – Care labelling has to be appropriate to the garment. For example ‘dryclean only’ may be appropriate for a linen suit but would be inappropriate for a pair of jeans.

Size – The letters on the label must be of medium width and not less than 1.5mm high. A number of labels that have come to the Commission’s attention have had lettering that is less than 1.5mm high.

Accessible – The care label must be attached in a position which is accessible to the customer. It should be placed where the customer is likely to look for it. This also means care has to be taken that the wording on the labels can be read and is not sewn into the seams.

Permanent - The label must be permanent and the information on it must remain for the life of the garment. Therefore the label must be able to withstand cleaning as per the care instructions. The label should also be in a position where:

♦ It does not detract from the appearance of the garment.
- A consumer is unlikely to cut the label off because it irritates when wearing the garment.

**Drycleaning** – The care label must have drycleaning instructions and drycleaning symbols if the garment can be drycleaned.

**Colourfast** – The care label must warn if the article is not colourfast.

**Tumble Drying** – The label must warn against tumble drying when it would cause the fabric to shrink. A label should not say ‘do not tumble dry’ when the garment will withstand this treatment.

**Trims** – The care instructions need to suit the trim, for example, leather trim on a woollen coat.

**Two Piece Garments** – Both parts of a garment, for example, the jacket of a suit, need to be labelled when both parts are drycleanable.

**Ironing** – The care label may need ironing instructions for a ‘dryclean only’ garment if it may be pressed between drycleaning treatments.