

Demystifying



Many products sold in North America require conformance to Underwriters Laboratories (UL), Canadian Standards Association (CSA), or both in order to demonstrate to customers that the products meet accepted safety standards. Depending on the product application, there are specific material, construction, and testing requirements to meet the relevant standard. UL products can be recognized, listed, or multi-listed.

UL Recognized:



A UL recognized product (RU®) only requires that the raw materials used to produce the product meet minimum UL standards. Often, these materials have already been tested by the manufacturer and are listed in a database by UL that is readily available on the internet. Recognized products can also be an assembly of raw materials that meet UL standards. This is referred to as construction recognition and the product carries the same (RU®) designation, but typically no testing is required. This is typically the fastest and lowest cost level of UL designation.

UL Listed:



Listed products require not only that the raw materials meet minimum UL standards, but the finished product must be rigorously tested to ensure that it meets safety requirements for every relevant hazard for that UL standard--from toxic off-gassing to fire and electric shock. This testing allows the product seller to place the coveted UL listing mark on their product. This is the highest level of compliance that can be achieved for a UL designated product. The costs and lead times, therefore tend to be longer than those for UL recognition.

Multi-Listing:

Multi-listing can be done on any existing UL approved product – either recognized or listed. Multi-listing is typically an administrative change to a current UL file. Many customers simply want their own unique label and part number added to a mature product manufactured by East West. This allows the customer to have their own UL certification number (e-number) and their own part number displayed on their product's label. This is beneficial for customers of EW who wish to private label their product.

CSA:



CSA testing typically follows standards very similar to UL requirements. However, CSA refers to their compliance as certifications whereas UL designates approvals as listings. Products approved for CSA may carry the CSA certified mark or a cUL if it meets both CSA and UL requirements.

East West is very well versed with both UL and CSA requirements. Our engineering team has managed thousands of projects through the certification process. Both UL and CSA generate and maintain standards, and they also have their own laboratories and equipment used for testing products to these standards. However, there are a significant number of alternative, independent, 3rd party labs that can conduct UL and CSA testing. Intertek (ETL), MET labs, and FM Approvals are just a few domestic labs that can conduct the compliance review and testing as Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratories (NRTL certified). Further, EW's motor factory in China has its own UL-certified lab in which most tests required for electric motor UL approvals can be done. Benefits to using 3rd party labs include reduced lead time, cost, and more direct communication with the technical staff conducting the actual testing. East West makes every effort to utilize the most cost effective and time efficient solution of managing the approval process for every project.