

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT:

SALE OF GOODS:

GENERAL SANITIZERS/CLEANERS

The Ministry of Investment, Trade and Commerce, through the Supplies Control Unit (SCU) of the Belize Bureau of Standards, in collaboration with the Solicitor General's Office, Attorney General's Ministry, and the Ministry of Health, hereby informs the general public that Statutory Instrument No. 33 of 2020 has been introduced into law. This amendment to the Supplies Control (Prices) Regulations made effective March 14th, 2020 establishes maximum percentage mark-ups on wholesale and retail prices of general sanitizers/cleaners. The newly introduced Part F of the First Schedule to these regulations seeks to cover major categories of goods for domestic and commercial applications and includes bleach, peroxide and other supplies: liquid soap, face masks (N95) and alcohol based sanitizers.

These regulations as introduced, are a direct response to address price gouging currently being experienced in the market place relating to COVID-19. Wholesalers and Retailers shall take heed to Regulations 13, 14, and 18 (1) respectively, of the Supplies Control (Amendment) Regulations, as follows:

“The vendors of any price-controlled goods sold whether for cash or credit shall in every case where the sale is by retail, forthwith furnish the purchaser with a bill on which he shall set out a full description of such goods, the quantity sold and date of such transaction, the name and address of the vendor and the purchaser, the price at which the goods are being sold, and where the sale is by wholesale the maximum retail price at which such goods should be sold.”

“Every trader of any price-controlled goods shall keep a record of all particulars relating to the cost of goods imported or otherwise purchased by him, so as to enable the Controller of Supplies, a price control officer, a police officer or any person authorised by



the Controller of Supplies readily to trace the landed cost or the cost of acquiring such goods, and failure to keep such record shall be an offence under these Regulations.”

“Any person authorised by the Controller of Supplies shall be and is hereby empowered to demand and take possession of evidence either by way of articles, invoices, books or other documents, or by such information as may be available for the purpose of verifying the pricing of any goods offered for sale by any person carrying on a manufacturing, wholesale or retail business; and if such evidence as may be required be not forthwith furnished although available, or on being furnished be found to be in any respect false or if the person authorised as aforesaid be obstructed or hindered in the performance of his duties, the person so offending as well as the owner, manager or other person in charge of the business shall be guilty of an offence under these Regulations.”

The SCU further advises as per Regulation 28 (1) that -

“If any person contravenes or fails to comply with any of these Regulations, or any direction or requirement imposed under any of these Regulations, or if any person obstructs or hinders or causes to be obstructed or hindered any person acting in pursuance of the power conferred by any of these Regulations, then, in all such cases for which a specific penalty is not provided in any other of these Regulations, such person shall be guilty of an offence against these Regulations and shall on summary conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding twenty five thousand dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding twelve months, or to both such fine and imprisonment.”

The general public is advised that our Consumer Protection Toll free line (0-800-283-5587) will be available for Consumers to report any contraventions to these regulations.

Mr. José E. Trejo
Controller of Supplies
14th March 2020

