

Wage and Hour Division, Labor

§ 779.324

sale of goods as such). In determining whether such an installation is incidental to a retail sale or constitutes a nonretail construction activity, it is necessary to consider the general characteristics of the entire transaction. Where one or more of the following conditions are present, the installation will normally be considered a construction activity rather than incidental to a retail sale:

(1) The cost to the purchaser of the installation in relation to the sale price of the goods is substantial;

(2) The installation involves substantial structural changes, extensive labor, planning or the use of specialized equipment;

(3) The goods are being installed in conjunction with the construction of a new home or other structure; or

(4) The goods installed are of a specialized type which the general consuming public does not ordinarily have occasion to use.

(e) An auxiliary employee of an exempt retail or service establishment performing clerical, maintenance, or custodial work in the exempt establishment which is related to the establishment's construction activities will, for enforcement purposes, be considered exempt in any workweek if no more than 20 percent of his time is spent in such work.

“RECOGNIZED” AS RETAIL “IN THE PARTICULAR INDUSTRY”

§ 779.322 Second requirement for qualifying as a “retail or service establishment.”

If the business is one to which the retail concept is applicable then the second requirement for qualifying as a “retail or service establishment” within that term's statutory definition is that 75 percent of the establishment's annual dollar volume must be derived from sales of goods or services (or of both) which are recognized as retail sales or services in the particular industry. Under the Act, this requirement is distinct from the requirement that 75 percent of annual dollar volume be from sales of goods or services “not for resale” (§ 779.329); many sales which are not for resale lack a retail concept and the fact that a sale is not for resale cannot establish that it is recognized

as retail in a particular industry. (See *Wirtz v. Steepleton General Tire Co.*, 383 U.S. 190.) To determine whether the sales or services of an establishment are recognized as retail sales or services in the particular industry, we must inquire into what is meant by the terms “recognized” and “in the particular industry,” and into the functions of the Secretary and the courts in determining whether the sales are recognized as retail in the industry.

§ 779.323 Particular industry.

In order to determine whether a sale or service is recognized as a retail sale or service in the “particular industry” it is necessary to identify the “particular” industry to which the sale or service belongs. Some situations are clear and present no difficulty. The sale of clothes, for example, belongs to the clothing industry and the sale of ice belongs to the ice industry. In other situations, a sale or service is not so easily earmarked and a wide area of overlapping exists. Household appliances are sold by public utilities as well as by department stores and by stores specializing in the sale of such goods; and tires are sold by manufacturers' outlets, by independent tire dealers and by other types of outlets. In these cases, a fair determination as to whether a sale or service is recognized as retail in the “particular” industry may be made by giving to the term “industry” its broad statutory definition as a “group of industries” and thus including all industries wherein a significant quantity of the particular product or service is sold. For example, in determining whether a sale of lumber is a retail sale, it is the recognition the sale of lumber occupies in the lumber industry generally which decides its character rather than the recognition such sales occupies in any branch of that industry.

§ 779.324 Recognition “in.”

The express terms of the statutory provision requires the “recognition” to be “in” the industry and not “by” the industry. Thus, the basis for the determination as to what is recognized as retail “in the particular industry” is wider and greater than the views of an employer in a trade or business, or an

association of such employers. It is clear from the legislative history and judicial pronouncements that it was not the intent of this provision to delegate to employers in any particular industry the power to exempt themselves from the requirements of the Act. It was emphasized in the debates in Congress that while the views of an industry are significant and material in determining what is recognized as a retail sale in a particular industry, the determination is not dependent on those views alone. (See 95 Cong. Rec. pp. 12501, 12502, and 12510; *Wirtz v. Steepleton General Tire Co.*, 383 U.S. 190; *Mitchell v. City Ice Co.*, 273 F. 2d 560 (CA-5); *Durkin v. Casa Baldrich, Inc.*, 111 F. Supp. 71 (DCPR) affirmed 214 F. 2d 703 (CA-1); see also *Aetna Finance Co. v. Mitchell*, 247 F. 2d 190 (CA-1).) Such a determination must take into consideration the well-settled habits of business, traditional understanding and common knowledge. These involve the understanding and knowledge of the purchaser as well as the seller, the wholesaler as well as the retailer, the employee as well as the employer, and private and governmental research and statistical organizations. The understanding of all these and others who have knowledge of recognized classifications in an industry, would all be relevant in the determination of the question.

§ 779.325 Functions of the Secretary and the courts.

It may be necessary for the Secretary in the performance of his duties under the Act, to determine in some instances whether a sale or service is recognized as a retail sale or particular industry. In the exceptional case where the determination cannot be made on the basis of common knowledge or readily accessible information, the Secretary may gather the information needed for the purpose of making such determinations. Available information on usage and practice in the industry is carefully considered in making such determinations, but the “word-usage of the industry” does not have controlling force; the Secretary “cannot be hamstrung by the terminology of a particular trade” and possesses considerable discretion as the one responsible

for the actual administration of the Act. (*Wirtz v. Steepleton General Tire Co.*, 383 U.S. 190; and see 95 Cong. Rec. 12501-12502, 12510.) The responsibility for making final decisions, of course, rests with the courts. An employer disagreeing with the determinations of the Secretary and claiming exemption has the burden of proving in a court proceeding that the prescribed percentage of the establishment's sales or services are recognized as retail in the industry and that his establishment qualifies for the exemption claimed by him. (See *Wirtz v. Steepleton*, cited above, and 95 Cong. Rec. 12510.)

§ 779.326 Sources of information.

In determining whether a sale or service is recognized as a retail sale or service in a particular industry, there are available to the Secretary a number of sources of information to aid him in arriving at a conclusion. These sources include: (a) The legislative history of the Act as originally enacted in 1938 and the legislative history of the 1949, 1961, and 1966 amendments to the Act pertaining to those sections in which the term “retail or service establishment” is found, particularly in the section 13(a)(2) exemption; (b) the decisions of the courts during the intervening years; and (c) the Secretary's experience in the intervening years in interpreting and administering the Act. These sources of information enable the Secretary to lay down certain standards and criteria, as discussed in this subpart, for determining generally and in some cases specifically what sales or services are recognized as retail sales or services in particular industries.

§ 779.327 Wholesale sales.

A wholesale sale, of course, is not recognized as a retail sale. If an establishment derives more than 25 percent of its annual dollar volume from sales made at wholesale, it clearly cannot qualify as a retail and service establishment. It must be remembered, however, that what is a retail sale for purposes of a sales tax law is not necessarily a retail sale for purposes of the statutory definition of the term “retail or service establishment”. Similarly, a showing that sales of goods or services