

STANDARDS 101

An introduction to voluntary standards and their role in health and safety worldwide



What is a standard?

Simply put, a standard is an agreed-upon way of doing something. In practice, it is a document that sets specific **guidelines for the design, operation, manufacture, and use of nearly everything produced by mankind**. There are standards to protect human health, safety, and the environment, and others to ensure that different products work compatibly together, and work safely, effectively, and reliably as intended.

International standards can cross borders to assure governments, regulators, companies, and consumers that products and services are safe, reliable, and of good quality, across the global economy. For business, they are strategic tools that reduce costs by minimizing waste and errors and increasing productivity. And they help companies access new markets, level the playing field for developing countries, and facilitate free and fair global trade.

Who creates standards?

Developed by groups of engineers and other experts, **voluntary standards are consensus based**, and are the result of cooperation between technical professionals, companies, industry groups, and government and consumer representatives. **Standards represent the combined expertise of those with a stake in the technology**, working to agree upon requirements and best practices.

ISO, ANSI, and ASN

The **International Organization for Standardization (ISO)** is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 163 national standards bodies. Experts from all over the world work collaboratively in technical committees to develop voluntary, consensus-based, market-relevant international standards that support innovation and provide solutions to global challenges.

The **American National Standards Institute (ANSI)** is the U.S. member of ISO, and works to initiate standards-based solutions for national and global priorities.

The **Association Sénégalaise de Normalisation (ASN)**, Senegal's national standards body and ISO member, develops national standards and oversees conformity assessment activities that promote safety and quality.



Critical Need, Global Solution: Developing an International Standard for “Next-Generation Toilets”



The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 2.5 billion people have no access to safe, clean toilets, and 1 billion are forced to defecate in the open. Such circumstances are linked to crime and approximately 700,000 preventable child deaths every year. **Next-generation toilets, also referred to as sustainable non-sewered sanitation systems**, are a practical solution. By documenting the commonly accepted criteria by which to measure the performance of next-generation toilets, an international standard will enhance efforts to widely manufacture, market, and deploy the technology where it is needed most.

A newly formed **ISO Project Committee (PC) 305, Sustainable non-sewered sanitation systems**, is focused on the development of an international standard in this area. The work is now well underway, with ANSI leading the administration of PC 305 in a twinning arrangement with ASN in Senegal, and with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. An ISO International Workshop Agreement (IWA) was published in 2016, providing a baseline so that relevant reinvented toilet products can be developed, tested, and marketed while the standard is being finalized.

MORE
INFO

For a list of countries participating in ISO PC 305, visit <https://sanitation.ansi.org/Standard/ISO30500>

To get involved in ISO activities, contact your national standards body: www.iso.org/iso/home/about/iso_members.htm

For the latest news on ISO PC 305's activities, visit www.ansi.org/news – search “toilet”