

Annual Special Tax Renewals are Due July 1st

By Betty Oldiges (513)684-3688

ATF has mailed the preprinted Annual Special Tax Renewal Registration and Return packages for Tax Year 2003 to 291,684 taxpayers, representing 409,282 business locations. Special tax is paid for each business location at a tax rate ranging from \$250 for alcohol beverage retail dealers to \$1,000 for alcohol and tobacco manufacturers and producers. Certain firearms importers and manufacturers also pay the tax.

Special tax is occupational tax imposed by the Internal Revenue Code and ATF is responsible for collecting the tax. A tax return and payment is due upon initially commencing business activities and again each year by July 1. The tax year runs July thru June 30. Special tax is different from many other taxes and is paid in advance of taxable business operations and not after the fact. It is important that taxpayers file their tax returns and pay special tax timely to avoid penalty and interest.

Businesses liable for the special tax that have not received the preprinted form should contact the National Revenue Center toll free at 1-800-937-8864 or direct at (513)684-2979 between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Eastern time, for assistance and to obtain forms and instructions. Businesses may also contact the nearest ATF Field Division or Headquarters Office for assistance. ATF Form 5630.5, Special Tax Registration

and Return can also be downloaded and printed from the ATF website www.atf.treas.gov. ■

◆ Regulations Corner ◆

Viticultural Area Petitions

By Nancy Sutton (415)947-5192

Vineyard industry member and associations are petitioning for new viticultural areas in large numbers, with the Regulations Division considering 33 petitions. These industry groups and individuals believe their market place success is linked to viticultural area claims for their grapes that can be used on wine labels.

Petitioning trends include proposals for wine grape-growing areas in states with no other approved viticultural areas, for smaller wine grape-growing regions with larger viticultural areas, and for re-alignment of existing viticultural areas. Petitioners in Idaho, North Carolina and Minnesota, otherwise known for their potatoes, tobacco and lakes, have filed their States' first viticultural area petitions. Six petitions are being considered for areas within Oregon's Willamette Valley viticultural area. Nine California wine grape-growing regions, located in larger viticultural areas, are in the petitioning process. Several petitions are requesting expansion of established viticultural areas to include vineyards and land adjacent to the original boundaries. Hopefully not a trend, three petitions from the West Coast include the names Red Hill or Red Hills. ■



Plain Language Revision of Labeling and Advertising of Malt Beverages

By Joanne Brady (215)597-5288

ATF published ATF Notice 946, a notice of proposed rulemaking on June 26, 2002, to revise Part 7 in accordance with plain language principles. What are plain language principles? Plain language principles are writing tools that we use to give our rules greater clarity and ease of reading. This proposal makes rules for labeling and advertising of malt beverages easier to understand. Plain language saves the government and the private sector time, effort, and money. This rulemaking also gives us a plain language version to serve as a model for revision of other parts of our regulations. While ATF included minor technical amendments, there are no changes in requirements from existing regulations. ATF encourages you to read the new version of the regulations and welcome your comments on the effects of the plain language on your understanding of these rules. ■

New Alcohol Labeling and Formulation Division Internet Section

By Adam Krauthaim (202)927-8140

The Alcohol Labeling and Formulation Division (ALFD) is pleased to announce the release of their newly designed section of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) internet site. The ALFD section is intended to be more informative and user friendly; possessing navigation links to useful resources and pertinent information. This change will provide industry members with assistance when submitting labeling and formulation applications, as well as, provide updated information on our new COLAs Online project due to be released in the first quarter of 2003.

COLAs Online is a new web-based system that will give alcohol industry members and third party filers the option to file applications for Certificates of Label Approval via the ATF web site and will allow the Alcohol Labeling and Formulation Division personnel to process the application electronically. In addition, it will provide to applicants electronic notification of approval or rejection of submissions.

The ALFD section of the internet site also serves as an excellent means for disseminating pertinent labeling and formulation information. ALFD's internet section is located at <http://www.atf.treas.gov> under "Alcohol," positioned in the red strip at the top of your screen. Users must then proceed to the Alcohol Labeling and Formulation link (previously titled "Customer Service") found in the site link box on the right hand side of the page. The ALFD section of the ATF website may also be accessed by typing the following direct link: <http://www.atf.treas.gov/alcohol/alfd.htm>. Please bookmark this section of the website for future reference.

The Alcohol Labeling and Formulation Division strongly encourages you to visit our new internet section of the ATF website to keep abreast of newly released information, COLAs Online updates and answers to questions you may have concerning your labeling and formulation matters.

In attempt to better serve you, the Alcohol Labeling and Formulation Division welcomes your comments and suggestions. If you have any input regarding the new ALFD internet section, please contact ALFD customer service at (202)927-8140, toll free (866)927 ALFD (2533) or by e-mail at alfd@atfhq.atf.treas.gov. ■

New Editor/Staff Assistant on Board in the Alcohol and Tobacco Directorate

By Joette Brown (202)927-5000

I have been selected as the new Editor of the Alcohol and Tobacco monthly newsletter and Staff Assistant for the Office of Alcohol and Tobacco Directorate. My main duties will consist of but are not limited to overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Assistant Director's office. I have been employed with the Bureau since August 1993, and have held various positions ranging from Student Trainee, Program Assistant, Firearms Technology Assistant, Secretary and my current position as Staff Assistant. I look forward to working with many of you in carrying out the Bureau's mission. ■

ATF Hosting the International Conference on Illicit Tobacco Trade (ICITT)

By Dave Royalty (202)927-8200

Washington, DC – Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) Director will host the International Conference on Illicit Tobacco Trade (ICITT) from July 30 through August 1, 2002, at the United Nations in New York. The ICITT is not a treaty negotiation. However, the ICITT will bring together representatives from the law enforcement and revenue offices of up to 191 Member States of the World Health Organization to discuss and identify best practices to address illicit tobacco trade around the globe. During the three-day conference, the attendees will participate in panel discussions and working groups to identify best practices concerning tobacco licensing, record keeping, border patrols, contraband, and counterfeit cigarettes, and cigarette labeling, tracking, and tracing. The ICITT stems from the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, May 1999 resolution of the World Health Assembly, governing body of the World Health Organization, which paved the way for multilateral negotiations to begin on a set of rules and regulations that will govern the global rise and spread of tobacco products in the 21st century. ATF is Part of the U.S. delegation to the FCTC. The FCTC will reconvene in October 2002, when it will consider, among other things, the suggestions for best practices coming out of the ICITT. Additionally, as agreed between the United States of America and the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, industry and others will be provided access to the conference through the public gallery and in accordance with the security arrangements determined by the United Nations. Additionally, limited spaces are available for non-governmental organizations, industry and others to display materials (Requests for attendance and displays can be sent to ICITT@atf.treas.gov). Along side the Director's press release, ATF's web site has been updated reflecting information regarding the ICITT at <http://www.atf.treas.gov/tobacco/icitt/index.htm>. ■



Upcoming Events

June 29 – July 5
New World Wine
Forum
South Africa

July 23 – 25
Retail Tobacco Dealers
Association
Convention and Trade
Show
Las Vegas, NV

Questions or suggestions relating to the Alcohol & Tobacco Newsletter should be directed to the Editor by fax at (202) 927-5611 or by mail at the following address: Bureau of ATF, 650 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Room 8110, Attention: Joette Brown, Editor, Alcohol & Tobacco Newsletter, Washington, D.C. 20226.