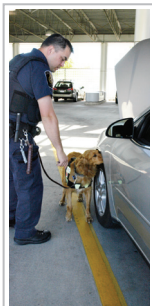
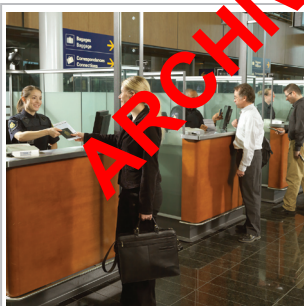


# Marine Container Examination Program

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## **Marine Container Examination Program**

Officers of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) work at marine container examination facilities in Halifax, Saint John, Montréal, Vancouver and Prince Rupert, to facilitate the movement of legitimate goods into Canada. CBSA officers apply a risk management approach in the examination of all marine containers, ensuring the prosperity and security of Canadian business and residents.

### **Why is my container being examined?**

Due to the large available volume within marine containers, they have been found to be a preferred method of transport for illicit goods. Smugglers use elaborate schemes and sophisticated techniques to conceal their illicit goods within marine containers. Even the most reputable importer is at risk to the techniques employed by smugglers. It is for this reason that importers should not consider an examination to be an accusation of wrong-doing.

Representatives of shipping lines provide the CBSA with cargo information before containers arrive. CBSA officers review this information using a number of computerized information systems. They

then apply their experience in targeting and analysis to determine whether a container should be examined for contraband. The CBSA also conducts examinations to ensure compliance with Canada's food, plant and animal regulations, including wood packaging and soil contamination.

## **What legal authority does the CBSA have to examine my goods?**

The examination process is authorized by the Customs Act. The Act makes the person reporting the goods responsible for presenting them to a CBSA officer for examination. This includes the responsibility for all costs associated with transporting the goods to an appropriate and secure examination area, as well as the unloading and reloading of containers.

## **Why does the CBSA test my container for chemicals?**

The CBSA requires testing of all marine containers for fumigants prior to examination. To mitigate the risk of exposure, employees are instructed to follow procedures, which include mandatory testing for known common toxic industrial chemicals and setting ventilation time frames followed by re-testing until safe levels are reached. The CBSA recognizes that the chemical testing process can sometimes cause delay

for importers, and it has invested in new testing and ventilation equipment to help expedite this process.

## **Why is my shipment being held for examination by another government department?**

The CBSA administers over 90 acts and regulations on behalf of other government departments (OGDs), including the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Health Canada, etc. These OGDs are responsible for establishing the import requirements for various commodities and the CBSA is responsible for enforcing these policies as they apply at the border.

## **Why was I charged a fee for my container to be transported for examination?**

The CBSA and the transportation industry have agreed that the best option for examining marine cargo containers for contraband is to use a specialized central examination facility. Examination teams can operate more efficiently by using high-tech equipment to conduct thorough and timely examinations in a secure environment.

It is the responsibility of the shipping industry to select warehouse operators for the transportation, unloading, and

reloading of containers at centralized examination facilities. The facility operator generates the fees for presenting the goods for examination, to cover the cost of transportation to and from the examination facility and for unloading and reloading the container. The facility operator bills these costs to the shipping lines that in turn pass the cost to the importer.

The CBSA pays for all costs associated with our services, including the inspection personnel, the equipment and the tools required for marine container examinations.

### **Who is responsible for damage to a container or its contents?**

Any damage to a container or its contents is unfortunate. The party responsible at each stage of the shipping and examination process is responsible for damages caused while under their control. If you have concerns regarding damage to a container or its contents, your first point of contact should be the shipping line.

CBSA officers conducting container examinations do so with the utmost care, carefully noting the condition of the goods, any visible damage, and the depth and intensity of the examination. CBSA

officers use X-ray machines and high-tech equipment such as the Ionscan to make the examinations less intrusive, more streamlined, and to reduce the risk of damage.

## **Why does the CBSA examine shipments for soil contamination?**

Any amount of soil and/or related matter from any offshore country, including the United States, presents a risk for pest and disease introduction, which can cause harm to Canada's economy, environment and natural resources.

To facilitate the movement of your cargo, ensure it arrives clean and free of soil contamination. Shipments of goods that are contaminated with soil are not permitted to enter Canada, and are ordered removed under the authority of the *Plant Protection Act* and the *Health of Animals Act*.

All expenses related to the movement, inspection, treatment, storage and ultimate disposal of shipments for suspected or confirmed soil contamination are the responsibility of the importer or the person in care and control of the shipment. For more information concerning processes for goods contaminated with soil, consult our [fact sheet](#).

## **Why is the wood packaging material (WPM) in my shipment being examined?**

WPM refers to wood or wood products (excluding paper products) used in supporting, protecting or carrying a commodity, and include dunnage used to secure or support a commodity but which does not remain associated with the commodity.

CBSA officers examine wood packaging to ensure it is free of living pests and to ensure it has been treated, marked, or is accompanied by a valid Phytosanitary Certificate.

To facilitate the entry of your shipment to Canada, ensure you are aware of and comply with the Government of Canada's import requirements. Shipments of goods that contain wood packaging found to be non-compliant with the Government of Canada's import requirements will be refused entry and ordered removed from Canada.

All expenses related to the movement, inspection, treatment, storage and ultimate disposal of shipments for suspected or confirmed non-compliant wood packaging

are the responsibility of the importer(s) or the person in care and control of the shipment. For more information, consult the [Wood Packaging](#) page on our Web site.

## **What can I do if my goods were damaged?**

In the event that your shipment has been damaged, it is the carrier's responsibility to contact the appropriate party to initiate a claim. Please consult the following scenarios:

- If the shipment was damaged during transportation, please contact your carrier to discuss their claims procedure
- If the shipment was damaged during the offload/reload, please contact the offload service provider to begin the claims process. The offload service provider is responsible for damage they cause and will note any damage in writing.
- If the shipment was damaged during examination by the CBSA, please contact a superintendent at the port of entry to begin the claims process. The CBSA will note any damage caused, in writing.



## Where can I find more information?

Consult the Directory of CBSA Offices on our Web site for information on how to contact CBSA staff at the container examination facility nearest you. More information about how the CBSA works to ensure the prosperity and security of Canada and its residents through marine container examinations is available at [www.cbsa.gc.ca](http://www.cbsa.gc.ca).

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