

Policy Guidance Regarding Use of the DOE Seal

Our office frequently receives questions regarding the use of the DOE Seal. This document outlines the various regulatory restrictions associated with use of the seal, which is administered through the MA-44 office.

Under the general government ethics principles found in Subpart G of 5 C.F.R. 2635, government employees may not use official authority, including their public office, to endorse or otherwise give the appearance that they or their agency endorses a private entity, or the activities of a private entity. This restriction also prevents employees from appearing to give governmental sanction regarding any such activities, including approving the use of the official seal for unofficial purposes. Additional restrictions on the use of the seal can be found at 5 C.F.R. 1002.31.

The DOE seal should not be authorized for use in any of the following circumstances:

- (a) Contractor-operated facilities.
- (b) Souvenir or novelty items.
- (c) Toys or commercial gifts or premiums.
- (d) Letterhead design, except on official Departmental stationery.
- (e) Matchbook covers, calendars, and similar items.
- (f) Civilian clothing or equipment.
- (g) Any article which may disparage the seal or flag or reflect unfavorably upon DOE.
- (h) Any manner which implies Departmental endorsement of commercial products or services, or of the user's policies or activities, unless permitted by specific statutory authority.

Improper uses of the DOE seal include:

- (a) Business cards associated with outside entities;
- (b) Use of the seal to advertise meetings, training sessions, or conferences that are not hosted directly by the Department involving the use of federal funds without specific prior approval;
- (c) Use of the seal on commercial internet sites;
- (d) Use of the seal in personal business activities;
- (e) Use of the seal to influence any governmental or nongovernmental entity regarding unofficial matters.

For further assistance regarding these matters, please contact GC-77 at 202-586-1522.