

BIS licence, a prerequisite for FSSAI licence to manufacture packaged drinking water

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The apex food regulator, FSSAI, has issued an order saying that the FBOs involved in the manufacturing of the packaged drinking water (PDW) and mineral water (MW), were required to obtain a BIS licence while applying for FSSAI licence.

The order, FSSAI says, would ensure compliance with the condition of BIS licence and shall come into force from April 1, 2021.

The FSSAI order stated, "It has been decided to make BIS licence/application for BIS licence, a pre-condition for issuing FSSAI licence."

Further, the FSSAI order added that a procedure is laid down for considering the application for issue of FSSAI licence in case of manufacturing of packaged drinking water and mineral water.

The 'procedure' includes mandatory uploading of a copy of BIS licence or copy of letter indicating recording of application for BIS licence at the time of applying for a new licence for PDW and MW from FSSAI on the online system of FoSCOS.

After obtaining a BIS licence, the FBO needs to furnish its details in the online Annual Return available in FosCoS, says an official with the FSSAI while adding that the BIS licence shall be a mandatory document while applying for renewal of FSSAI licence as well.

The procedure laid by the FSSAI also says that in the event of closure or rejection of application for licence by BIS, the FBO needs to inform the concerned licensing authority and the FSSAI application or licence in such a case would be liable for rejection, suspension or cancellation.

According to the FSSAI, the FBOs have to obtain licence or registration before commencement of the food business. Under the rules in FSS –Restriction and Prohibition-Regulations, there is a condition laid that 'no person shall manufacture, sell or exhibit for sale, packaged drinking water and mineral water except under the Bureau of Indian Standards –BIS certification Mark.

The order came after the food regulator received complaints that many such FBOs were operating without BIS certification-mark.