LEGAL METROLOGY

Legal metrology rules add requirements for electricity meters

G.S.R. 809(E) adds Part XIV on active electrical energy meters to the Legal Metrology (General) Rules, 2011: accuracy classes A to D, tests and re-verification.

THE DEPARTMENT OF Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, issued notification G.S.R. 809(E), dated September 15, 2026, making the Legal Metrology (General) Fifth Amendment Rules, 2026. The Central Government made them under section 52 of the Legal Metrology Act, 2009, and they were published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (i), No. 741, of the same date. They insert Part XIV, "Active Electrical Energy Meters", into the Eighth Schedule of the Legal Metrology (General) Rules, 2011. They come into force 180 days after the date of publication in the Official Gazette. They give no calendar date; the Gazette issue is dated September 15, 2026, and its digital signature is dated September 18, 2026.

KEY FACTS

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Part XIV covers electricity meters, instruments that measure electrical energy continuously and store the result. It defines interval, prepayment, multi-tariff, direct connected, transformer operated, electromechanical and static meters, and sets separate minimum current ratios for direct connected and transformer-operated meters. The manufacturer must specify one of four accuracy classes: A, B, C or D. A note says "Class B is the lowest accuracy class allowed for large consumers, i.e. where consumption exceeds 5000 kWh/year." An informative annexure adds that class A meters may be acceptable where energy consumption is low, and that higher classes should be used for higher rates of consumption. Base maximum permissible errors run from ±2.0% for class A to ±0.2% for class D at unity power factor between the transitional and maximum currents.

Every meter must be marked with, among other things, the manufacturer, approval mark, serial number, year of manufacture and accuracy class. Electronic registers must keep results for at least one year in a disconnected meter. Legally relevant software must carry a software identification, stated in the type approval certificate, and be sealed against unauthorized change by mechanical, electronic or cryptographic means. A simple password is not accepted for protecting parameters. Any adjustment of a device-specific parameter, including zeroing the total energy register, must be recorded automatically and non-erasably, for example in an audit trail. A software update in the field needs re-verification, unless it meets the rules for a traced update, which is logged and checked for authenticity and integrity.

An application for type approval must include documents identifying the type, its metrological characteristics and technical specification, user and installation manuals, and software documentation covering the legally relevant modules, interfaces, commands, protected parameters and sealing methods. Type tests cover accuracy (initial intrinsic error, self-heating, starting current, no load and meter constants) and influence quantities such as temperature, voltage, frequency, harmonics and magnetic fields. They also cover disturbances such as electrostatic discharge, surges, voltage dips, short-time overcurrent, climatic conditions and durability. All meters need initial verification, and meters that have been repaired or otherwise

changed need re-verification. In-service meters are re-verified every 3 years for electronic types, and every 2 to 5 years for electromechanical induction types, depending on the type.

Interval meters must store billing data, and a multi-tariff meter may have only one tariff register active at a time, besides the cumulative register. The rules leave the minimum storage period for interval data to the Central Electricity Authority or another organization authorized by the Government, and let the Director (Legal Metrology) prescribe stricter test regimes. The informative annexure also says Part XIV does not cover EMC emissions, electrical and personal safety, or the security of communication protocols and further handling of measurement results. The rules do not say how meters already installed are treated when Part XIV comes into force. The notification is signed by Anupam Mishra, Additional Secretary, under F. No. I-9/22/2014-W&M. The principal rules were last amended by G.S.R. 568(E), dated July 3, 2026.

Issued by	Department of Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
Document	Notification G.S.R. 809(E), the Legal Metrology (General) Fifth Amendment Rules, 2026
Dated	September 15, 2026
Published	Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part II, Section 3, Sub-section (i), No. 741, September 15, 2026
Amends	Eighth Schedule of the Legal Metrology (General) Rules, 2011: Part XIV, "Active Electrical Energy Meters", inserted after Part XIII
Applies to	Electricity meters measuring active electrical energy, including interval, prepayment, multi-tariff, direct connected, transformer operated, electromechanical and static meters
Takes effect	180 days after the date of publication in the Official Gazette; the Gazette issue is dated September 15, 2026
Accuracy classes	A, B, C and D; class B is the lowest allowed where consumption exceeds 5000 kWh/year
Units	Wh, kWh, MWh or GWh
Rated operating conditions	Frequency within 2% and voltage within 10% of the nominal values set by the manufacturer; lower temperature limit chosen from -55 °C, -40 °C, -25 °C, -10 °C or +5 °C and upper limit from +30 °C, +40 °C, +55 °C or +70 °C; humidity and water class H1, H2 or H3
Re-verification of in-service meters	Electronic types: 3 years; electromechanical induction types: 2, 3 or 5 years by type

Not covered	EMC emissions; electrical and personal safety; security of communication protocols and further handling of measurement results
Legal basis	Section 52(1), read with clauses (c), (f), (h), (i) and (s) of section 52(2), Legal Metrology Act, 2009
Signed by	Anupam Mishra, Additional Secretary
File number	F. No. I-9/22/2014-W&M

Base maximum permissible errors (%) by accuracy class (Table 2 of Part XIV)

Current	Power factor	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D
Itr ≤ I ≤ Imax	Unity	± 2.0	± 1.0	± 0.5	± 0.2
Itr ≤ I ≤ Imax	0.5 inductive to 1 to 0.8 capacitive (the table's note: "The power factor requirement is from 0.5 inductive to 1 to 0.5 capacitive")	± 2.5	± 1.5	± 0.6	± 0.3
Imin ≤ I < Itr	Unity	± 2.5	± 1.5	± 1.0	± 0.4
Imin ≤ I < Itr	0.5 inductive to 1 to 0.8 capacitive	± 2.5	± 1.8	± 1.0	± 0.5
Ist ≤ I < Imin	Unity	± 2.5·Imin/I	± 1.5·Imin/I	± 1.0·Imin/I	± 0.4·Imin/I

The notification (PDF, 1.8 MB)

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