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## **Fact Sheet – Changes in Schedule III Prescription Requirements**

Senate Bill 151 (Chaptered by Secretary of State, Chapter 406, Statutes of 2003) is a complicated bill that makes substantial changes to California law regarding prescribing controlled substances. Optometrists will be affected by the following passages:

- Effective January 1, 2004 Schedule III controlled substance prescriptions must only be signed and dated by the prescriber.
- Effective January 1, 2005, all Schedules of controlled substance prescriptions must be written on tamper resistant prescription forms. Prescribers must order the new tamper resistant forms from security printer companies that have been pre-approved by the Board of Pharmacy and the Department of Justice. The Board of Pharmacy maintains a list of approved security printers on their Web site at [http://www.pharmacy.ca.gov/security\\_printer.htm](http://www.pharmacy.ca.gov/security_printer.htm).

The new forms must have a number of security features including:

- Void protection to prevent duplication or chemical washing to alter prescriptions.
- Watermark on the backside of the prescription with the text “California Security Prescription.”
- Thermo-chronic ink that changes color when exposed to heat.
- A description of the security features printed on each prescription form
- Quantity check off boxes
- The preprinted name, category of licensure, license number, and federal controlled substance registration number of the prescribing practitioner.

Other changes effective January 1, 2005 include:

- Pharmacies must report Scheduled III controlled substance prescription information to the controlled Substance Utilization Review and Evaluation System (CURES).
- Prescribers dispensing Schedule III controlled substances must report those prescriptions to CURES.
- Phone and fax orders for Schedule III drugs are still permitted. Fax orders should be on an ordinary prescription form - not the new tamper resistant forms. Use of the new forms will result in a voided prescription.
- If a prescriber must write a prescription for a Schedule III drug before obtaining a security prescription pads and it is not feasible to fax or phone the prescription, the prescriber may use an old prescription pad and write “H&S Section 11167 exemption” on the prescription. In such cases, prescribers **must submit the same prescription to the pharmacy on a security pad within 7 days**. Failure to do so will be reported to the Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement.

Prescribers are strongly encouraged to obtain a security prescription pad as soon as possible. For more information: [http://www.pharmacy.ca.gov/info\\_prescribe\\_rph.htm](http://www.pharmacy.ca.gov/info_prescribe_rph.htm).