

## **117-328 Radio and TV Stations**

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Code Section 12-36-2120(26) exempts from the tax the sale of "all supplies, technical equipment, machinery and electricity sold to radio and television stations, and cable television systems, for use in producing, broadcasting or distributing programs. For the purpose of this exemption, radio, and television stations, and cable television systems are deemed to be manufacturers."

In light of the last sentence hereinabove, another statutory exemption (Code Section 12-36-2120(17)) is available. It reads that there is exempted from the measure of the tax levied, assessed or payable, "The gross proceeds of the sale of machines used in . compounding, processing and manufacturing of tangible personal property; provided that the term 'machines,' as used in this article, shall include the parts of such machines, attachments and replacements therefor which are used, or manufactured for use, on or in the operation of such machines and which are necessary to the operation of such machines and are customarily so used; but this exemption shall not include automobiles or trucks ."

An AM radio station is defined as a broadcasting station licensed by the Federal Communications Commission for the transmission of radiotelephone emissions primarily intended to be received by the general public and operated on a channel in the band 535-1605 kc/s. An FM radio station, including non-commercial educational radio stations, would come within the same definition except that it is operated on a channel in the band 88.1-107.9 mc/s. A television broadcasting station would also come within the same definition except that it is licensed to transmit both visual and aural radiotelephone emissions and is to be operated in the 54-890 mc/s frequency.

Sales of electricity to radio and television stations for use directly in producing programs and in broadcasting, and to provide necessary lighting therefor, are exempted from the sales and/or use tax. Also, electricity to operate air conditioning machinery necessary to the operation of exempt technical equipment and machinery and for live telecast is exempt from the tax.

Sales of electricity for any other purpose are subject to the tax, such as, but not limited to, electricity used in administrative offices, supervisory offices, parking lots, storage warehouses, maintenance shops, safety control, comfort air conditioning, elevators, housekeeping equipment and machinery, cafeterias, canteens, first aid rooms, supply rooms, water coolers, drink boxes and unit heaters.

The exemption applies to all purchases or rentals of supplies for use directly in the preparation of programs and in broadcasting, to include flash bulbs, paper supplies, stage properties when customarily re-used, such as stock articles of furniture and equipment, props (including materials from which props are fabricated), film, recording tape, artists supplies,

chemicals for use in developing films, syndicated and feature films, phonograph records, transcriptions, script services, sheet music, syndicated tape and transcribed programs.

The term "technical equipment and machinery" is defined as specialized equipment and machinery peculiar to the industry when purchased for use directly in preparing programs or broadcasting. The term shall likewise include replacement parts and attachments therefor, and power wiring or cable connecting exempt technical equipment and machinery when such wiring is not built into and a part of a building or structure.

Examples of exempt technical equipment and machinery used in programming are timers, splicers, viewers, sound readers, projectors, screens, editing tables and lighting boards, darkroom equipment and machinery used for developing film for use in preparing programs, and cameras, recorders and mobile equipment and machinery (not including automobiles and trucks) used by station employees in newsgathering and in transmission.

Examples of studio technical equipment and machinery are: For radio stations, turntables, microphones, audio consoles, tape recorders, headphones and speech input equipment.

For television stations, all of the foregoing, and in addition, video switching equipment, cameras, film chains, slide projectors, film projectors, studio lighting and studio dimmer or light control boards.

Transmission equipment consists of AM, FM, and TV transmitters complete, to include coaxial cables or transmission lines connecting antennas to transmitters.

Antenna equipment consists of the antenna proper, not including towers and lights. (Note, however, when the tower is the antenna, as in AM radio, it is deemed to be exempt technical equipment.)

Purchases of broadcast testing machinery used primarily for the purpose of maintaining audio or visual transmission quality are not subject to the tax.

Machines, including typewriters, purchased for use primarily in producing program logs are exempted from the tax.

Machinery purchased for use in fabricating backdrops or props is not subject to the tax.

Subject to the tax are purchases of standard or stock articles of office equipment, such as desks, chairs, typewriters, billing machines, filing cabinets, film storage cabinets and general office supplies used in billing customers and for general office use; machinery, equipment and supplies (not including, however, tubes and replacement parts) for use in repairing technical equipment or machinery; and all purchases of building materials for use in constructing a building or structure, to include soundproofing materials for studios, radio or television towers (except as indicated hereinabove), plumbing fixtures, pipe, wiring, structural foundations (even

though for exempt equipment or machinery) and air conditioning ductwork. (Note, however, that air conditioning machinery necessary to the production of live telecast and for the proper functioning of exempt technical equipment and machinery is not subject to the tax.)

**HISTORY: Added by State Register Volume 26, Issue No. 6, Part 2, eff June 28, 2002. Amended by State Register Volume 30, Issue No. 6, eff June 23, 2006.**