Appendix 5.01D

## Consumer Responsibilities

Directions: Review these explanations and examples to aid in understanding consumer responsibilities. Read each responsibility like this example: “the responsibility to use products safely.”

* To use products safely
* Use products for their intended purposes and guard against carelessness
* Read and follow manufacturer’s directions for safe use of products
* Benefit: protects consumers and others from potential harm
* To find and use information
* Find and use information when planning a purchase
* Conduct research on products before making a purchase
* Consult several reputable sources to gather information about an intended purchase
* Compare products (product features, costs, and warranties) and service policies
* Benefit: optimum satisfaction from purchases
* To choose purchases carefully
* Become knowledgeable about companies that produce products
* Use buying power to support companies with ethical practices and reliable product
* Benefit: increases the likelihood that purchase decisions meet consumer needs
* To speak up
* Voice compliments as well as legitimate complaints
* Being an effective communicator is important in getting your message heard
* Register complaints promptly
* Identify product defects and/or service problems
* Contact a local or regional store manager or a consumer affairs department
* File a complaint with the Better Business Bureau (BBB)
* Benefit: provides feedback to sellers about product problems and deficiencies
* To seek redress
* Actively pursue remedies when products do not meet expectations
* Seek to exchange a faulty product for the same or a similar product
* Use receipt or other proof of purchase to request a refund or an apology
* Benefit: contributes to balance between sellers’ and consumers’ interests
* To learn
* Learn skills needed to make informed, confident choices about purchases
* Take courses related to consumer education
* Benefit: builds consumer skills/confidence to function effectively in the marketplace
* To reward good service
* Use buying power to support reliable sellers and service providers
* Avoid buying from non-reputable companies
* Benefit: helps reputable businesses thrive; makes it harder for shoddy businesses to operate
* To promote a healthy, caring relationship with the environment
* Support companies whose practices sustain the environment
* Purchase/use recycled products and those that contain recycled content
* Avoid littering and use appropriate waste receptacles
* Benefit: improves the quality of life for current and future generations