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## Default Docstrip Headers

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Many L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X users now distribute packages in documented source form using the docstrip system. Docstrip allows a header to be placed on generated package files, suitable for copyright information or distribution conditions.

If the docstrip install file distributed with a package does not provide an explicit header, the docstrip system will add a default header to all generated files. Previously the default header was the following text:

```
This is file 'myfile.sty',
generated with the docstrip utility.
```

```
The original source files were:
```

```
myfile.dtx (with options: 'package')
```

```
IMPORTANT NOTICE:
```

```
For the copyright see the source file.
```

```
You are *not* allowed to modify this file.
```

```
You are *not* allowed to distribute this file.
For distribution of the original source see the terms
for copying and modification in the file myfile.dtx.
```

Unfortunately the above conditions make it illegal to distribute the generated file, even if the full sources are included, thus making it impossible to include the package in 'ready to run' distributions such as the T<sub>E</sub>X Live CD.

Starting with the 1998/06/01 release of L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X the default header has been changed to allow such usage; it is now as follows:

```
This is file 'myfile.sty',
generated with the docstrip utility.
```

```
The original source files were:
```

```
myfile.dtx (with options: 'package')
```

```
IMPORTANT NOTICE:
```

```
For the copyright see the source file.
```

```
Any modified versions of this file must be renamed
with new filenames distinct from myfile.sty.
```

```
For distribution of the original source see the terms
for copying and modification in the file myfile.dtx.
```

```
This generated file may be distributed as long as the
original source files, as listed above, are part of
the same distribution. (The sources need not
necessarily be in the same archive or directory.)
```

**Note:** This change *does not* affect any distribution that sets an explicit preamble in the docstrip install file. In particular it does not result in any changes to the distribution conditions placed on files generated from the base L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X distribution.

If you currently distribute a package on a public archive which does not specify a docstrip preamble (with the `\preamble` or `\usepreamble` commands in the docstrip install file) then this change **will affect you**.

- We hope that you will prefer the new default, which allows your package to be used in many of the more popular T<sub>E</sub>X distributions.
- However, if you prefer the more restrictive distributions conditions in the previous releases then you will need to update your install file to specify the command

```
\usepreamble\originaldefault
```

before the commands generating the affected package file.

We apologise that this change potentially requires package authors to update their files on the public archives, but the old default text caused great problems for many distributors and there was no way to change the default behaviour without affecting existing files using that default.

## References

- [1] Frank Mittelbach, Denys Duchier, Johannes Braams, Marcin Woliński, and Mark Wooding. The docstrip program. Part of the L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X distribution as file `docstrip.dtx`.
- [2] Michel Goossens, Frank Mittelbach and Alexander Samarin. *The L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X Companion*, chapter 14. Addison-Wesley, Reading, Massachusetts, 1994.

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