

The Rules for WEEE

Information for Producers

The Regulations

On 2 January 2007 the **Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2006** come into force. They will have an important impact on manufacturers, importers, sellers, distributors and users of most types of Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE).

The purpose of the Regulations is to transpose the bulk of the provisions of the EC WEEE directive which aims to address the environmental impacts of WEEE and to encourage its separate collection, and subsequent treatment, reuse, recovery, recycling and environmentally-sound disposal (CTRRD). It seeks to improve the environmental performance of all those involved in the life-cycle of EEE.

From the 1st of July 'producers' of EEE will have the responsibility of financing the CTRRD of the WEEE for which they have an obligation.

What products are obligated?

The Regulations state they apply to all equipment which is dependent on electric currents or electromagnetic fields in order to work properly, and have a voltage rating not more than 1000V ac or 1500V dc, and fall in the following numbered categories:

1. Large household appliances
2. Small household appliances
3. IT and telecommunications equipment
4. Consumer equipment
5. Lighting equipment
6. Electrical and electronic tools (with the exception of large-scale stationary industrial tools)
7. Toys, leisure and sports equipment
8. Medical devices (with the exception of all implanted and infected products)
9. Monitoring and control instruments
10. Automatic dispensers

There is also an indicative list provided in the Regulations which gives examples of the types of products covered by the above Categories, but this is not intended to be exhaustive.

Who needs to take action?

In the period between January and July 2007 all the companies involved in the EEE supply chain will have to take action to comply with the Regulations:

If you are a producer, you have several legal obligations under the WEEE Regulations, and must either arrange for the CTRRD of WEEE, or pay your producer compliance scheme (PCS) to do this on your behalf. The Regulations differentiate between EEE sold for household (i.e. consumer use by members of the public) or non-household (eg. professional, business, charitable) use.

You must:

- ensure that EEE you put onto the UK market is marked with a "crossed out wheeled bin" symbol to assist with its separate collection from other waste streams, with a producer's mark, and an indication of date;
- make available certain information about new types of EEE to assist reuse, treatment facilities and recyclers;
- provide your producer registration number(s) to distributors when you sell EEE, e.g. through incorporation in the invoice;

- join an approved producer compliance scheme (PCS) that has been approved by the Environment Agency, which:
 - will register you as a producer and provide you with your producer registration number
 - will report information to the Environment Agency on the amount of EEE you put on the UK market, by category and type of intended user;
 - may arrange for the CTRRD of WEEE, and trading of evidence, on your behalf;

Producers of household EEE also need to support your producer compliance scheme's declarations of compliance with its obligations for WEEE, according to the contribution which your sales of EEE in the UK make to them. You may do this either financially, according to the charge structure of your PCS, or by providing your PCS with evidence that you have undertaken the CTRRD of your proportion of their obligations for which your sales make you responsible, or a combination of these.

If you place EEE on the consumer ('household') market, you will be responsible for funding the CTRRD of your share of WEEE 'separately collected' at 'Designated Collection Facilities' – likely to be mainly municipal household waste sites. The Government will tell you what your share is and what the costs will be.

If you place EEE on the Business to Business ('non-household') market after 15th August 2005, you will have to make arrangements (if required by the end-user) to collect and treat the equipment at the end of its life. If you are supplying a product which replaces, on a like-for-like basis, another producer's product that was put on the market before 15th August 2005, you will also have to collect and treat this if the end-user requires. Most producers will make arrangements with their PCS to do this on their behalf

Producers are encouraged to improve the reusability and recyclability of EEE, and your product design or manufacturing processes should not hinder reuse of your products, except for overriding safety or environmental reasons.

If you do not comply with each of your legal obligations under the Regulations you will be committing a criminal offence and will be subject to enforcement action.

How much is this likely to cost?

Every producer registered with the Environment Agency will be charged a fee – this will depend on the turnover of your company. The fees charged for 2007 are given in the Regulations as:

Non Vat registered companies	-	£ 30
Vat registered TO below £1 million	-	£ 220
Vat registered TO above £1 million	-	£ 445

Each PCS will charge a membership fee and a charge per tonne of WEEE handled. If you already collect and treat your own WEEE you will be allowed to continue to do this, but the data on how much has been collected and the material recovery rates will have to be reported through your PCS. This charge will vary depending on the Category of WEEE – some WEEE is easier to treat than others.

Producer Compliance Schemes are being very coy about both their membership fees and their handling charges. Only one scheme is prepared to give a quotation for the costs of membership and handling for the first compliance period (2007) – to find out more visit **WeeeCare.com** or **phone 0844 800 2004** for your quotation