

Newsletter from January 10th, 2008

1.

Ministers call on consumers to recycle WEEE!

部长们呼吁消费者循环处理废旧电子电气设备!

- Ministers are seeking to raise awareness of WEEE recycling facilities among consumers!
- A network of 1,556 collection sites is now available across the UK!



- 部长们努力提高消费者对废旧电子电气设备循环处理的意识!
- 全英国已经建立了具有1556个收集点的回收网络!

Ministers are seeking to raise awareness of WEEE recycling facilities among consumers, in the first publicity of the government's electronics producer responsibility system to tie in with the Christmas period.

Energy minister Malcolm Wicks and recycling minister Joan Ruddock linked up today to inform householders who "will be wondering what to do with their old TVs, radios, laptops and fridges" following the end of the festive season.

The ministers pointed out that the billions being spent each year on new electronic goods make waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) the "one of the fastest growing types of waste in Europe".

A network of 1,556 collection sites is now available across the UK for householders to take their unwanted electrical goods to be recycled., including 1,111 council-run civic amenity sites

Collections from these "designated collection facility" sites are funded by manufacturers and importers of new goods, under the WEEE Regulations, which came fully into force in July 2007.

The regulations also require electronics retailers to either provide free in store take-back or point customers to a local civic amenity site, who will take old appliances free of charge.

"Good progress"

The government has held back from a full publicity campaign concerning WEEE collection and recycling since the regulations came into force last year, with officials explaining that they were waiting to make sure the system was fully effective before seeking to steer consumers to collection sites.

But even with the absence of a national publicity campaign so far, the government said the UK is already making "good progress" in collecting WEEE to meet its targets under Europe's WEEE Directive. Latest figures indicate that the average person in the UK recycles 7 kg of electrical goods a year, "well above the EU directive's target of 4 kg by 2008", ministers said.

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Mr Wicks said: "From fridges to flatscreens, many people will have received the latest must have gadgets at Christmas or bought them in the sales - and need to dispose of their old equipment. In fact around two million tonnes of electrical goods are thrown out every year in the UK alone.

"Through the WEEE directive we have built a network to service every household in the UK, with over 1,100 recycling sites open to the public. Now it's up to consumers to play their part - ask your retailer or local authority what service they offer, or simply go to your tip," the minister told consumers.

Mrs Ruddock added: "Unwanted televisions, computers and mobile phones can be put to good use - if they are reused or recycled in the correct way. Individuals and producers can play a vital role in tackling waste, by ensuring that these unwanted goods are disposed of correctly."

Improvements

The government said it will be seeking to improve the WEEE system in 2008, based on experience of its use around the UK. This will include feedback from the industry-led WEEE Advisory Body expected to meet quarterly after its first meeting later this month as well as anticipated improvements to the Settlement Centre, the organisation co-ordinating WEEE producer responsibility (see letsrecycle.com story).

And, the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) will be leading discussions with business on this year's review of the WEEE Directive at European level.

Minor adjustments to the WEEE Regulations came into force yesterday under the WEEE (Amendment) Regulations 2007, requiring tighter evidence and reporting requirements, to encourage further identification of whole appliances for reuse.

The changes clarify issues involved in managing WEEE data, dealing with the re-use of equipment and clearing up questions to do with a householder's right to return equipment into the system free of charge.

Source: letsrecycle.com

2.

UK Government consults on implementation of the EU Batteries Directive!

英国政府部门对欧盟电池指令的实施进行了协商!

- Increasing the level of recycling and reducing some of the millions batteries that go to landfill annually!
- The proposals are aimed at finding the best way to raise environmental performance of new batteries!

- 提高循环处理水平并且减少每年废旧电池的垃圾丢弃量!
- 该提案的目的是寻找最好的方法来 提高新型电池的环保绩效!



A consultation paper on the implementation of the EU Batteries Directive has been issued by BERR (Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform), which covers the UK.

Increasing the level of recycling and reducing some of the millions batteries that go to landfill annually are at the heart of plans published, according to BERR.

The proposals put forward are aimed at finding the best way to raise environmental performance of new batteries and ensure collection, treatment and recycling when they become waste. They apply to all types of batteries, including rechargeables and batteries supplied within electrical items.

Batteries and accumulators (essentially re-chargeable batteries) are categorised into portable, industrial and automotive with definitions provided in the paper. Interestingly accumulators from battery powered vehicles are classed as industrial rather than automotive and the Government is proposing to similarly class batteries from vehicles that also use other fuel sources to supplement electrical energy, e.g. hybrid cars.

The consultation paper seeks views on the collection and recycling of the various battery types involved, battery composition/marketing requirements and possible synergies with existing legislation on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) and end of life vehicles (ELV).

Batteries Directive

The Batteries and Accumulators and Waste Batteries and Accumulators Directive (2006/66/EC) replaces Directive 91/157/EEC on Batteries and Accumulators Containing Certain Dangerous Substances. The 1991 Directive provided a limited range of environmental and product design controls, covering only an estimated seven percent of consumer batteries and accumulators on the EU market.

In 2003 the European Commission proposed to bring all batteries and accumulators within the scope of a new Directive, which was subsequently adopted in 2006 and came into force on 26 September 2006. The new Directive covers all batteries with the exception of some related to military or space applications.

The aim is to improve the environmental performance of batteries and associated activities of producers, distributors and end users with special emphasis on the treatment and recycling of waste batteries.

The UK along with other Member States will need to transpose the Directive into national law by 26 September 2008.

Key provisions

Key provisions of the new Directive cover:

- Restrictions on the use of mercury and cadmium
- Battery labelling requirements to aid consumer choice and recycling
- A 25% collection rate for waste portable batteries by September 2012, rising to 45% by September 2016
- Banning disposal by landfill or incineration of waste industrial and automotive batteries
- The introduction of “producer responsibility” obligations
- Use of recycling efficiencies to attain a high proportion by weight of waste batteries recycled
- Establishment of waste battery treatment standards.

As waste industrial and automotive batteries will be prohibited from treatment by landfill or incineration, this effectively means that they will be subject to a 100% recycling rate.

Although BERR is the Department with overall responsibility for the consultation, Defra (Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) will lead on portable batteries.

BERR says that the Consultation Document is written as if the same approaches to implementation will be taken across the UK, but the Department acknowledges it will be for the Devolved Administrations to decide whether they wish to introduce their own legislation to transpose the environmental provisions in the Directive.

Earlier consultation

The consultation document has been published following extensive informal consultation by the Departments including with stakeholder groups, according to BERR, and devolved administrations have undertaken their own consultations.

The paper puts forward the approach BERR, DEFRA and Devolved Administrations have developed to achieve the Directive’s objectives, for consideration and comment.

Source: MoreThanWaste

3.



Ring in the new rules!

敲响新规定!

- Environmental mandates continue to challenge the design and electronics supply chain as the industry moves into 2008!
- 环保指令继续挑战电子产品的设计与供应链，以作为进入2008年的产业!
- Electronics designers must concern themselves with the entire product lifecycle!
- 电子产品设计者必须在设计过程中顾及产品的整个生命周期!

Environmental mandates continue to challenge the design and electronics supply chain as the industry moves into 2008.

If you thought compliance with Europe's Restriction of Hazardous Substances (ROHS) would get you through the next phase of environmental mandates, think again. ROHS was only a preview of the challenges the electronics supply chain will be facing in 2008 and beyond.

"The bottom line is there will be more products and restricted substances covered under both the ROHS and WEEE [Waste Electrical and Electronics Equipment] initiatives," said Gary Nevison, director of legislation and environmental affairs for distributor Newark. "Exemption categories will be reviewed [this year] and exemptions may or may not be withdrawn. A review of the mandates' scope and definitions could lead to more products falling within restrictions." For example, medical equipment and monitoring and control instruments—currently excluded from ROHS—are very likely to be included following an EU review.

Uncertainty still surrounds China's environmental mandate—commonly referred to as "China ROHS"—as the industry waits to see which products will be subject to controls. A catalog describing which products and their substance restrictions is expected to be published by the end of this year.

Additionally, designers will have to concern themselves with the EU's Energy Using Products directive (EUP) and REACH. EUP aims to improve the environmental performance of products through lower power consumption. REACH is a new EU regulation that aims to ensure all chemicals are fully tested by industry and used in safe ways.

Electronics designers, in short, must concern themselves with the entire product lifecycle. At the front-end, components and solder must be free of lead and other restricted substances. Throughout their useful life, devices must consume less energy. And on the back end, electronics have to be easily recycled.

"You wouldn't think a designer would have to worry about recycling," said Nevison, "but the costs of recycling extend all the way down to a removing a screw or some plastic clips that can easily be undone so PCBs can quickly be taken apart. So many things must be changed and the onus of change falls on the design engineer."

Any kind of consistency within various global environmental mandates is still a long way away. Many component makers, OEMs, and EMS (electronics manufacturing services) providers will still have to contend with two parallel universes: one in which their customers require compliance and one in which they do not.

For example, Sensata Technologies, a manufacturer of sensors and controls, serves customers in both ROHS-compliant and ROHS-exempt industries. Many customers, particularly those in the automotive and aircraft industries, design systems to exacting safety standards. Because different materials perform in different ways, Sensata provides its customers with its best available test information. “We may have 30 years of test information on a motor control compressor that has lead in the contacts and 6 months worth of testing on the same product that is ROHS complaint,” said Stuart Sleeman, safety manager for Sensata. “We can tell our customers that the latter product works, but is that the one you want?”

Sparton Corp, an EMS provider that serves the defense, medical and aerospace industries, faces the same dilemma. Some customers are reluctant to switch to ROHS-compliant products for design and safety reasons. However, component makers are continuing to phase out noncompliant product lines rather than produce two “flavors” of the same device. “For an OEM to change from leaded to lead-free at the design level is a big deal,” said Dave Hockenbrocht, CEO of Sparton. “You have to do the design and then do the testing to determine if the lead-free products meet all the [industry safety] requirements. In some cases, they don’t.”

Although power-consumption regulations are slightly less burdensome, design engineers will still have to choose components and materials carefully. “Companies have to look at designing equipment with good ventilation because fans are a big consumer of power,” said Newark’s Nevison. “Low power-consumption ICs will also help. A lot of emphasis will be put on the design stage.”

Overall, Sparton’s Hockenbrocht said, environmental compliance “is still a very technically complex work in progress. I think it’s at least another 5 years before [mandates such as ROHS] are mature and are settled out.”

Upcoming mandates and how they impact the electronics supply chain

Versions of ROHS

ROHS was initially developed in the EU, but similar legislation is being adopted worldwide. China ROHS, for example, came into effect in March 2007, and applies to a very wide range of electrical equipment sold in China.

Phase 1 of China ROHS started in March and requires all electrical information products to be marked. There are no substance restrictions in phase 1, but pollution control labels indicating if any ROHS substances are present at concentrations above the maximum limit are needed. If a ROHS substance is present, a table of hazardous substances needs to be printed in Chinese in the instruction manual. The product packaging further requires a label that lists the codes for all of the main packaging materials used.

Phase 2 will start when the Chinese authorities publish a catalog of products subject to substance restrictions. All products in the catalog must be certified by approved Chinese test laboratories before they can be sold. It is likely that further phases will follow.

Korea has adopted the “Act for Resource Recycling of Electrical and Electronic Products and Automobiles” and this was scheduled to be implemented on January 1. This legislation is the Korean equivalent of EU ROHS and WEEE, but there are differences. Namely, the Korea ROHS scope will initially be restricted to consumer and some office equipment made in large quantities. The Korean government recently announced that the substance restrictions will be the same as EU ROHS, with similar

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exemptions. As in the EU, Korea ROHS compliance is by self-declaration, but manufacturers and importers will be required to make declarations of compliance on a Korean government Web site.

REACH

REACH aims to control hazardous substances by ensuring chemicals are tested and used safely. Beginning in 2008, designers and manufacturers should check with suppliers to determine that chemicals and preparations will not be withdrawn from the market; look in manufacturer's safety data sheets to identify hazardous materials as the most toxic substances are more likely to be withdrawn from the market; and avoid using any materials that contain hazardous substances in new product designs.

EUP

These measures will force designers to utilize new energy technologies including: switch-mode power conversion, integrated ICs, efficient transistors, resonant switching, and synchronous power rectification. Designs will also need to have low power consumption when not under load.

Source: EDN