

Newsletter from September 27th, 2007

1. China Task Force to Set Standard for e-Waste Testing!

- *Replacing tin-lead with pure tin is turning out to have been a huge mistake!*
- *Great, so the E.U. admits there is no reliable substitute. Yet, they require use of a substitute!*

BEIJING – The China Communications Standards Association has created a task force to study an e-waste recycling standard and a mandatory standard for testing detrimental chemicals in electronic products.

The latter will require all electronics communications products manufactured in the region to be tested prior to being available, according to a ChinaTechNews.com report.

The standard will emulate WEEE and RoHS to help China firms maintain components that comply with EU policies, especially companies that export products to Europe.

The study team will help the association supervise environment testing capabilities in China.

Source: Circuitsassembly.com

2. The reason for directives!

- *Joel Deutsch argues that the USA should adopt European-style environmental directives!*
- *We live in a throw away culture designed to feed and create a sustainable growth in manufacturing!*

This cycle of replace and not re-use has been and will continue to be influenced by government, media and their current quality standards. This practice, though economically stimulating, has created overwhelming amounts of what is now toxic heavy metal scrap materials destined for overseas and local recycling.

This scrap material is either headed for landfills or refineries, which results in putting toxins in the air or ground, which eventually will effect our ground water and what we drink.

It is from this process that the very real discovery of health related issues has been traced and linked to the materials and chemicals we use in manufacturing and the life cycle disposal of those products.

The idea of legally imposed environmental directives and controlled regulations is an excellent first step in recognising and establishing a plan to correct our environmental oversights.

Kudos to RoHS, WEEE, Green and other directives, their supporters and participants.

But at what expense and to whom?.

Are the US companies with needs to comply with imposed regulations left hanging out to dry?.

The summarised basis of the WEEE Directive is that every company that manufactures and is selling its products into the EU must have a plan to repair, re-use or recycle 75% of weight from the products' generated scrap materials; but in America we offer no incentives to co-operating manufacturers, no tax credit for offering recycled products to the public and no government backed media blitz supporting the American public in buying those goods.

Europe and certain other countries are far ahead of the curve at having a support culture, government and media to create a working E-friendly society with health for its people as their incentive and the preservation of our planet for all life as global motivation.

It is time we as a country create a change in the mindset of Americans for the benefit of our people not the all mighty dollar.

It is time to shift priorities to the care and health of our people and preservation of our citizens.

Source: electronicstalk.com

3. JRC helps countries and companies comply with RoHS!

- *Both companies and governments need to be sure that their laboratories can measure levels of these substances in a material!*
- *The IRMM is working closely with other reference labs around the world!*

Reference materials developed by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) are set to help companies and Member States comply with the RoHS (Restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment) Directive.

As the name suggests, the goal of the RoHS Directive is to protect both human health and the environment by restricting the use of hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment. According to the 2003 directive, 'Member States shall ensure that, from 1 July 2006, new electrical and electronic equipment put onto the market does not contain lead, mercury, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, poly-brominated biphenyls (PBB) or polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE).'

Needless to say, these rules mean that electronics manufacturers need to be able to test components from their suppliers to be sure that the final product complies with the regulations. Member States also need to test products to ensure companies are adhering to the rules.

Both companies and governments need to be sure that their laboratories can measure levels of these substances in a material to a high degree of accuracy, and this is where the reference materials come in.

'Reference materials are a vital tool for companies and law enforcement bodies,' said Dr Thomas Linsinger, a Project Manager in the Reference Materials Unit at the JRC's Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements (IRMM).

物盡其用 人盡其才



Earlier this year Dr Linsinger's team produced two certified reference materials consisting of plastic granules containing known amounts of a range of elements, including lead, mercury and cadmium. Laboratories can purchase these materials and run their own tests on them to see if they are able to detect the correct amounts of the elements involved.

The other elements contained in the reference materials include arsenic, bromine, chlorine and sulphur, so that labs can use the same reference materials to run tests relating to other European legislation including the Packaging Directive and the End of Life Vehicles Directive.

The IRMM has also produced a quality control material for the analysis of PBDEs and PBBs in polymers. Dr Linsinger points out that it is currently extremely difficult to determine precisely the levels of these substances in a material, and so for the moment the reference materials can only offer laboratories guidance as to the accuracy of their methods.

Now the IRMM is busy producing certified reference materials for these substances, which will provide greater certainty in terms of results. They are scheduled for release in 2008.

Meanwhile, demand for the new reference materials is high; in addition to Europe, California, Japan and China have similar legislation in place. The IRMM is working closely with other reference labs around the world, such as the National Institute of Standards and Technology in the US, to ensure that as many hazardous substances as possible are covered.

Source: cordis.europa.eu