

Simple Guide to 'WEEE RoHS' Legislation

Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive (2002/96/EC)

The WEEE Directive affects those involved in the manufacture, sale, distribution and recycling of electrical & electronic equipment.

The purpose of the Directive is to reduce the waste arisings and to improve the environmental performance of all those companies involved. Private householders will be able to return their WEEE to appropriate facilities free of charge and producers will be responsible for taking back and recycling the equipment.

By definition, the WEEE Directive does not apply to the Packaging industry

Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) (2002/95/EC)

RoHS affects those involved in the manufacture, sale, distribution and recycling of electrical & electronic equipment, is closely linked to WEEE, and restricts the use of six hazardous materials:

- lead
- mercury
- cadmium
- hexavalent chromium
- polybrominated biphenyls (PBBs)
- polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs)

From 1 July 2006 a producer may not put new electrical & electronic equipment (within eight categories specified within the WEEE Directive) onto the market in the EU if it contains more than the permitted levels of these six hazardous substances.

(The maximum concentrations are 0.1% by weight of the 'homogeneous material' for all substances with the exception of cadmium, which has a limit of 0.01%)

It is important to note that RoHS only applies to electrical & electronic equipment and does not apply to packaging

Members of the Corrugated industry can remind customers that, as producers of packaging, they are fully compliant with the packaging waste recycling obligations (Producer Responsibility Obligations [Packaging Waste] regulations 1997). Further, that industry meets all of the requirements of the Packaging (Essential Requirements) Regulations 1998. This is covered in further detail in Technical Bulletin No. 1.

REVIEWED: NOVEMBER 2007