

make it – sell it – recycle it

WEEE Exporters Factsheet

New rules for exporters of electrical & electronic equipment

The Regulations

Every year, the UK throws away around 2 million tonnes of WEEE. It is one of the fastest growing waste streams in the UK and the EU. In 2003, the EU adopted the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive to deal with this waste. The WEEE Regulations¹ to support this Directive in the UK came into force on 2 January 2007. More waste will be collected for treatment and recovery and less will go to landfill.

From 1 July 2007, all separately collected WEEE must be treated and recycled to the standards set out in the regulations. Exporters will only be able to issue evidence of WEEE treatment or recovery overseas if they have been approved by the Environment Agency².

We recommend that you read the regulations and guidance from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) as soon as possible to understand what is required of an approved exporter.

What you need to know

Compliance schemes that use exporters to organise the treatment and recovery of WEEE abroad, will only do so in future if those exporters are able to issue evidence. In order to do this, you will need approval from the Environment Agency. If granted, approval will last for one compliance period, after which you will have to apply again. All exports you make must be in accordance with the rules on transfrontier shipments of waste. As an approved exporter, you will be required to keep a record of all exports of WEEE and to ensure that all treatment or recovery overseas is undertaken to standards equivalent to those set out in the WEEE Directive.

From 1 July 2007 producer ‘compliance schemes’ will collect WEEE on behalf of producers. These compliance schemes, along with any producers who haven’t signed up to a compliance scheme, will need to show evidence of the treatment and recovery of WEEE. This is to show they have met their obligations under the WEEE Regulations. If the WEEE they have collected is exported (either before or after treatment), this evidence will have to be provided by an approved exporter. At the end of each compliance period, as an approved exporter you will need to appoint an independent auditor to validate the evidence you have issued.

¹ The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2006

² For exporters based in England or Wales.

What you need to do

We will be producing guidance on the approval process and the independent audits in the next few weeks. We are planning to start accepting applications for approval from 1 April 2007. This is a provisional date and may be subject to change. Guidance and other key information will be published in the WEEE section of our website www.environment-agency.gov.uk/weee

WEEE and the Waste Shipment Regulations

All exports of waste from the UK for disposal are banned. However, the export of WEEE for recovery is permitted and controlled by the EU Waste Shipments Regulations. All exporters of WEEE (or other wastes) need to comply with these export controls, not just those WEEE exporters that have been approved by the Environment Agency.

The UK Transfrontier Shipment of Waste legislation that supports these regulations is being revised and the new regulations will come into force on 12 July 2007.

For further guidance on the transfrontier shipment of waste (TFS) including the notification of the export of WEEE please visit our website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk; phone the TFS National Service on +44 (0)1925 542265, fax +44 (0)1925 542105; or email nattfs@environment-agency.gov.uk

Where to find out more

The Department of Trade and Industry has lots of up-to-date and in-depth information on its website: www.dti.gov.uk/innovation/sustainability/weee/page30269.html

You can also get more information on the regulations from our website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk/weee

There are links to frequently asked questions and a list of events, seminars and workshops you could attend to find out more.

There is also information on NetRegs website: www.netregs.gov.uk

You can phone us: 08708 506 506
or email us: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk