

Uncovering the New Waste Directives

Collection, Recycling and Recovery Targets Set for Electrical Products

– [TUV Rheinland of North America](#)

The European Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive (2002/96/EC) came into force February 2003. The WEEE Directive sets collection, recycling and recovery targets for various categories of electrical products.

The Restriction on Hazardous Substances Directive (ROHS) (2002/95/EC), which accompanies the WEEE Directive, bans the use of heavy metals and brominated flame-retardants in the manufacture of electrical and electronic equipment. Both directives must be implemented in European Member states by August 2004. Collection, treatment and financing systems for WEEE must be in place by September 2005 and the first collection and treatment targets are to be attained by December 2006. Key points of the new legislation include:

- A compulsory household collection target of 4 kg, by the end of 2006, with a new target to be established by the end of 2008.
- Producers are to meet recovery targets between 50% and 80% (depending on category) by the end of 2006.
- Compulsory producer responsibility for financing the management of consumer electronic and electrical waste. Producers will be able to use collective or individual financing schemes.
- Six heavy metals and toxic flame retardants (PBB, PBDE) used in the manufacture of appliances will be banned by July 2006.
- Member states must take measures to minimize the disposal of WEEE by consumers as unsorted municipal waste.
- Design and production shall address and facilitate dismantling, recovery, reuse and recycling of WEEE or their components.
- Producers are banned from preventing reuse or recycling of products with “clever chips,” such as those seen in some printer cartridges.
- Costs of treating products that have already been on the market are to be shared proportionately between producers on the market when the costs arise.
- Up-front financial guarantees to be made by producers to guard against costs arising from orphan WEEE.

Companies now have to start thinking as to how they will satisfy the needs of these directives. Does your company produce or distribute electronic goods? Do your products contain lead, mercury, cadmium, hexavalent chromium or brominated flame-retardants? To find out if your products fall within the scope of these directives, or can be correctly defined as exempt, please contact TÜV Rheinland for an official letter of exemption or Certificate of Conformity stating compliance to both directives.

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For more information or questions regarding global compliance contact us anytime.

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