

WEEE and Batteries Regulations – A quick start guide for retailers



Background

Waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) and batteries often contain hazardous components and substances¹ which can be damaging to the environment and can have negative effects on human health if not managed safely. There is a system in Ireland for the safe recycling and disposal of WEEE and waste batteries. Recycling these products means that valuable components can be used again in new products.

What legal obligations does a retailer of electrical equipment and/or batteries have?

1. **Register** with either a compliance scheme (WEEE Ireland or ERP Ireland) or with your local authority and **display the Certificate of WEEE Retailer Registration** in store.
2. **Display the applicable visible Environmental Management Cost (vEMC)** on the price notice of each relevant EEE product, including the following wording: “*Included in this price is a contribution to recycling costs of [insert amount of environmental management cost]*”. A full listing of vEMCs can be found here on the producer register website:
www.producerregister.ie/images/uploads/inner/Category_Listing_6.pdf
3. **Display a notice(s) informing customers** of the WEEE and battery return and collection systems available to them. See ‘Summary of Obligations’ below for more information.
4. **Take back waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE)** of similar type on a one-for-one, like-for-like basis, **free of charge**. If your sales area for EEE is greater than 400m², you must provide one-for-zero take-back (i.e. purchase of new equipment is not necessary).
5. Ensure that WEEE is **stored correctly** (weatherproof covering) and transferred to contractors operating on behalf of a compliance scheme. **Any unsolicited offers to take WEEE should be notified to the local authority, as this is unauthorised waste activity. Note: Unless approved to do so by your compliance scheme, retailers are not permitted to drop off WEEE at a civic amenity site.**
6. **Keep records** of quantities of WEEE taken back, stored and collected from your premises.
7. Ensure that all items of EEE and/or batteries you distribute are placed on the market by **validly registered producers**. Validly registered producers are obliged to display their unique Producer Register Limited

¹ Old fluorescent tubes contain mercury. Asbestos has been used in older appliances such as electric coffee pots, toasters and irons. Gases which are typically found in heating and cooling appliances can damage the ozone layer or impact on climate, if released, particularly from old fridges/freezers. Some appliances can contain explosive gases such as ammonia. Lead and other hazardous substances can also be released from TV/computer monitor screens if damaged or cracked. These materials can cause serious environmental damage and are dangerous to human health.

registration number on invoices, credit notes, dispatch and delivery dockets. Check out www.producerregister.ie/producers to check that your suppliers are validly registered.

Summary of Obligations

Obligation	WEEE	Batteries
Registration with local authority or approved compliance scheme.	Yes – required.	Yes – required but <u>not</u> if retailer only sells portable batteries (e.g. AA, AAA, Cell C, Cell D etc.).
Display visible environmental management costs (vEMCs), where applicable.	Yes – vEMCs apply to some categories of EEE. A full listing of vEMCs can be found here: www.producerregister.ie/images/uploads/inner/Category_Listing_6.pdf	No – not applicable for batteries.
Take back	Yes - retailers must provide free take back of WEEE from customers on a one-for-one, like-for-like basis. The appliance being returned must be of similar type or have performed the same function as the new item being purchased. Larger stores (i.e. with >400m ² floor sales area of EEE) must take back WEEE on a one-for-zero basis.	Yes - retailers are required to take back waste batteries from members of the public free of charge. Take-back is on a one-for-zero basis (i.e. no purchase is necessary). However, a retailer is not obliged to take back waste batteries of a type that they do not sell or that are leaking.
Notices	Yes – retailers must display relevant information and statutory notices.	Yes – retailers must display relevant information and statutory notices.
Storage, transport and disposal	Yes – retailers are obliged to take back and store WEEE. Retailers must only provide WEEE to a waste collection operator acting on behalf of a compliance scheme. Retailers are NOT permitted to use a civic amenity site for disposal of WEEE.	Yes – retailers are obliged to take back and store waste batteries. Retailers are permitted to take waste portable batteries only to a civic amenity site.
Record keeping	Yes - retailers are required to maintain records of quantities of WEEE taken-back, stored and removed from their premises.	No - retailers are not legally required to hold such records but doing so would be considered best practice.
Distribute from registered producer supply chain.	Yes – check invoices issued from supplier or check producer listing at: www.producerregister.ie	Yes – check invoices issued from supplier or check producer listing at: www.producerregister.ie