

WEEE Regulations – What do Retailers need to know?



Background

Electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) often contains hazardous components and substances which can be damaging to the environment and may have negative effects on human health when they become waste (WEEE)¹. There is a Producer Responsibility Initiative (PRI) in place in Ireland to fund the recycling and safe disposal of these products. Recycling rather than dumping means valuable components can be used again in new products and there will be less mining of raw materials.

So, what legal obligations do I have as a retailer of electrical equipment?

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 Environmental Management Cost (EMC)** on the price notice relating to each specific item of EEE, including the following wording: *“Included in this price is a contribution to recycling costs of [amount of environmental management cost]”*. See overleaf for more information on EMCs.
3. **Display a notice informing customers** of the WEEE return and collection systems available to them. Notices can be downloaded from www.weee-enforcement.ie
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 for a one-for-zero take-back (i.e. no purchase of new equipment is necessary).
5. Ensure that WEEE is **stored correctly** (weatherproof covering) and transferred to contractors operating on behalf of a compliance scheme (WEEE Ireland/ERP Ireland). **Any unsolicited offers to take WEEE should be notified to the local authority, as this is unauthorised waste activity. Note: retailers are no longer allowed to drop off WEEE to their local civic amenity facility.**
6. **Keep records** relating to quantities of WEEE taken back, stored and removed from the 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 WEEE Register Society registration number on invoices, credit notes, dispatch and delivery dockets. Check out www.weeeregister.ie/producers/ to ensure your suppliers are validly registered.

¹ For example, 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 fridges/freezers 10 to 15 years old. 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.

Visible Environmental Management Costs (from 1st July 2014)

Large Household Appliances	EMC
All side by side American style refrigeration	€10.00
All larder and two door (under/over configuration) refrigeration appliances	€5.00
All chest freezers above 150 litres	€5.00
All under counter/table top refrigeration	€5.00
All chest freezers below 150 litres	€5.00
Large appliances	€5.00

Consumer Equipment	EMC
Large colour televisions (73cm+)	€5.00

Lighting Equipment (with the exception of household luminaries)	EMC
Gas discharge lamps, LFLs and CFLs	€0.15
LED lamps and luminaires	€0.05
Other luminaires and lighting equipment	€0.00

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 (AA, AAA, Cell C, Cell D etc.)
Display visible environmental management costs (vEMC's), where applicable.	Yes – As of the 1 st July, vEMC's have been re-introduced for some categories of equipment. See www.weeeregister.ie for further information	No – not applicable.
Take back	Yes , retailers must provide free take back of WEEE from customers. Take-back is on a one-for-one basis and the appliance being returned must be of similar type or have performed the same function as the new item purchased. Larger stores (>400m ² floor area for EEE), will have to take back WEEE, one for zero).	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 (no purchase necessary). However a retailer is not obligated to take back waste batteries that are leaking.
Notices	Yes – retailers must display relevant information notices. Refer to www.weee-enforcement.ie	Yes – retailers must display relevant information notices. Refer to www.weee-enforcement.ie .
Storage, transport and disposal	Yes – retailers are obliged to collect and store WEEE. Retailers are NOT permitted to use the civic amenity site for WEEE. Retailers must provide WEEE to a contractor acting on behalf of a compliance scheme only	Yes – retailers are obliged to dispose of, store and transport waste batteries as required by the Regulations.
Record keeping	Yes - retailer required to hold records relating to quantities of WEEE taken-back, stored and removed from premises.	No - retailer is not legally required to hold such records but consider doing so, as best practice.
Distribute from registered producer supply chain.	Yes – check invoices issued from supplier or check out producer listing at: www.weeeregister.ie	Yes – check invoices issued from supplier or check out producer listing at: www.weeeregister.ie