



WEEE Directive / Recycling Mark

Background:

The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (the "WEEE Directive") has been implemented into the UK market, and came into force 13th August 2005. The WEEE Directive aims to prevent waste electrical equipment arising, to encourage reuse, recycling and recovery of this equipment, and to improve the environmental performance of all operators involved in the lifecycle of electrical and electronic equipment. The Directive sets requirements relating to criteria for the collection, treatment, recycling and recovery of WEEE. It makes producers responsible for financing most of these activities; retailers/distributors also have responsibilities in terms of take-back of WEEE and the provision of certain information. Private Householders should not however be charged for returning their waste electrical equipment.

Scope:

These Regulations apply to all electrical & electronic equipment placed on the market in the United Kingdom falling into any of the ten product categories below, unless the equipment is part of another type of equipment which does not fall into any of these categories. The Regulations also specify a voltage range into which these ten categories must fall to be covered by the scope. This is up to 1,000 Volts AC or up to 1,500 volts DC.

The 10 product Categories of Electrical and Electronic Equipment Covered by the WEEE Directive include:

1. Large household appliances
2. Small household appliances
3. IT and telecommunications equipment
4. Consumer equipment
5. Lighting equipment
6. Electrical and electronic tools (with the exception of large-scale stationary industrial tools)
7. Toys, leisure and sports equipment
8. Monitoring and control instruments
9. Medical Devices
10. Automatic dispensers

Exceptions:

The Regulations do not apply to:

- Equipment intended specifically to protect the UK national interest and for a military purpose, e.g. arms, munitions and war material.
- Filament Light bulbs
- Household luminaires
- Large-scale industrial machinery or tools
- Implanted medical equipment and infected medical equipment at end-of-life .

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Implementation:

The Directive states that with a view to minimising the disposal of WEEE and to help facilitate its separate collection, producers must appropriately mark electrical and electronic equipment put onto the market after 13th August 2005 with the symbol shown below:

This therefore means that the 'crossed-out wheelee bin symbol' MUST be affixed to all electrical and electronic products supplied to ASDA. The mark can be moulded into or marked onto a product, or can be attached as a permanent label. However, the label must be legible, durable and should pass a standard rub test. Where it is not possible or practical to affix the label directly onto the product it shall be applied:

- On a flag or label attached to the fixed supply cord (if any), and
- In the operating instructions and warranty of the product, where supplied.
- If it is not possible to affix the label directly on the product, fixed supply chord or in the warranty then the symbol MUST appear on the product packaging.

In addition to the mark appearing on the product, it is an Asda requirement that the mark and the following statement should feature in any user instruction guide supplied with the product –

“This symbol is known as the 'Crossed-out Wheelie Bin Symbol'. When this symbol is marked on a product, it means that the product should not be disposed of with your general household waste. Only discard electrical/electronic items in separate collection schemes, which cater for the recovery and recycling of materials contained within. Your co-operation is vital to ensure the success of these schemes and for the protection of the environment. “

Product construction details

Within one year after the product has been placed on the market, producers (or retailers) are required to provide the following details to the re-use centres, treatment and recycling facilities:

- Different components and materials used.
- Locations of any dangerous substances & preparations.

For this reason, suppliers must provide a detailed breakdown of each product that they supply listing all components, materials and chemicals that are used in the construction of the supplied product. This information can be supplied in the form of a product specification or Bill of Materials.

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