

Guidance on the Safe Destruction of Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment (WEEE)

Introduction

Almost every business has WEEE. Whether you manufacture, sell or simply use electronic products in your workplace, you are obligated under the UK Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations 2013 to dispose of it correctly.

What to be aware of

Anyone who produces, imports, keeps, stores, handles, transports or treats waste must apply the waste hierarchy and follow the Waste Duty of Care. Duty of care requirements are applicable to all parties in the waste management supply chain, but the legal responsibility remains with the waste producer until the final recycling, recovery or disposal has taken place. Valpak has produced summary overview documents for both the [Waste Duty of Care](#) and the [Waste Hierarchy](#).

When it comes to getting rid of unwanted materials people often select a service provider that offers them the best cost and turnaround time for collection. However, the world of waste electrical recycling can be confusing with many stipulations and standards that have to be met.

What separates WEEE from other waste streams is the potential high resale value of products, even when faulty or old, so it pays to not only look at financials but also to look at where the product will end up. Whilst reuse is generally more environmentally friendly than recycling, in some situations reuse isn't desirable. For example if you were a large television producer and you wanted to destroy a batch of faulty models, you want to ensure that the items are destroyed and that potentially dangerous equipment is not resold in that condition. Less scrupulous recyclers may offer to collect for considerably less cost than one of their competitors but they may not be able to give you the same level of security/assurance that the equipment has been destroyed.

Questions to ask

Where there is a need to ensure items are destroyed rather than reused, there are some simple questions you can ask to minimise your risk:

- Can the contractor provide proof of the goods in transit?
- Does the contractor operate its own fleet? If not, can they provide all the required documentation e.g. waste carriers licences?
- How long will it take for the goods to be destroyed?
- Are products held in a secure location?
- Am I able to watch my material being destroyed?
- Do you assess items for reuse?
- Can you guarantee that all items will be destroyed?
- Is it possible to have a Certificate of Destruction provided?

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Some top tips

- Always check the end use of the material. Many materials are repaired and restored which is fine, but if you do not want your product back on the market make sure this is clearly stated in your request/contract
- If you require items to be destroyed, it is worth putting a process in place to deface the items prior to them leaving your site. This can help reduce the chances of product inadvertently being reused.
- Destruction certificates should always be produced when you have requested that items do not go for reuse - make sure you request this before the collection has happened
- Always check the treatment centre is registered with the relevant enforcement Agency
- If you have a doubt over a contractor's ability then trust your instinct and check their processes thoroughly

Contact us

If you have any questions about the safe destruction of WEEE or any other waste management process please call us on **03450 682 572** or email us at info@valpak.co.uk

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