



Industry briefing

Waste portable batteries: responsibilities & regulations

January 2025



3 key takeaways

1. Producers, importers and trade bodies

Battery producers have a legal responsibility to finance take-back of batteries for recycling

2. Retailers & distributors

Battery sellers and distributors have a legal responsibility to take back customers' old batteries for recycling - and to tell their customers that they offer this

3. Consumers

Consumers need to know that they should always recycle rather than bin their old batteries.

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Who are Material Focus?

Material Focus is an independent, not-for-profit organisation which is funded through the UK WEEE regulations. Our role is to improve the UK e-waste system and to make it easier for everyone to reuse and recycle electricals. We do this through...

Insights

- Identifying, producing and sharing insightful, timely and impactful research to help build a better UK e-waste/ WEEE system.

Investments

- Identifying and funding projects that make it easier for people to reuse and recycle electricals, or that encourage circular design

Inspiration

- Creating and delivering communications which help make it feel easier for people to reuse and recycle electricals through our [Recycle Your Electricals](#) campaign.

What are the waste batteries regulations?

Waste batteries regulations

Battery producers are responsible for minimising harmful effects of waste batteries on the environment, by:

- improving the design of new batteries – you must follow [‘placing on the market’](#) rules
- paying for waste battery collection, treatment, recycling and disposal

You’re a battery producer if you have a UK business presence and you’re the first person in your selling chain (including importers) to make batteries available for supply or sale on the UK market.

Battery producers must:

- register with the appropriate [environmental regulator](#)
- accurately record the tonnage and chemistry of batteries placed on the market

How you register depends on the type of battery you sell and the amount of batteries you put on the market. To check which type of batteries you place on the market see [Waste batteries and accumulators: technical guidance](#).



How do I comply with waste batteries regulations as a producer?

Portable batteries producer - place more than 1 tonne a year on the market

You must pay for the collection, treatment and recycling of waste portable batteries. You do this by joining a [battery compliance scheme \(BCS\)](#) by 15th October before the start of the compliance year (calendar year). You pay the BCS an annual fee and it takes on your duties.

The BCS will:

- register you annually with the correct environmental regulator
- pay the environmental regulator £600 annually for each member
- send information to your environmental regulator about the batteries you placed on the market in the previous 2 years and the current year
- get evidence notes for the collection, treatment and recycling of waste portable batteries
- send information to your environmental regulator about the waste batteries they collect and deliver for treatment and recycling
- Tell your BCS within 14 days if you need to make changes to your registration details or are no longer a large portable batteries producer

Portable batteries producer - place 1 tonne or less a year on the market

- You must register with the [environmental regulator](#) of the UK country where your registered office is on the [National Packaging Waste Database \(NPWD\)](#).
- Each year you must submit the tonnage and chemistry on the NPWD to confirm how many batteries you placed on the market in the previous year.
- This must be done by **31 January in the following year** and the annual charge is £30.
- Tell your regulator if you're no longer a small portable batteries producer within one month of the change.

List of approved Battery Compliance Schemes (BCS)

Scheme Name:

Contact:

Website:

Wastecare Compliance

complianceservices@wastecare.co.uk

compliance.wastecare.co.uk

ERP UK

uk@erp-recycling.org

www.erp-recycling.co.uk

REPIC

info@repic.co.uk

www.repic.co.uk

Valpak Ltd.

info@valpak.co.uk

www.valpak.co.uk



Waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) - batteries in products

If you place products containing batteries on the UK market, you will need to report separately the weight of:

- electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) you place on the market without batteries, as part of your [WEEE Regulations](#) duties
- batteries in the EEE, as part of your [Waste Battery Regulations](#) duties

Even if your EEE does not fall under the WEEE Regulations, you will still be a battery producer.

How do I comply with waste batteries regulations as a retailer?

Retailer and distributor responsibilities - for all retailers selling 32kg or more batteries a year

- You must offer free collection ('takeback') of waste or used batteries if you sell or supply 32kg or more of portable batteries per year.
- **One pack of 4 AA batteries per day equals about 32kg per year.**
- You must have a collection point at all premises from where you supply batteries. This applies if you run a shop, a chain of shops or sell batteries online, by mail order or telephone.

Collection Point: you must have a collection point in your place of business.

- It should be suitable for the safe storage of all kinds of portable batteries, not just the types you sell.
- You must let people know that you collect used batteries, for example by displaying posters in your premises or publishing it on your website.



Batteries you must take back:

You must take back any type of sealed battery that can be carried without difficulty by an average person. This includes (but is not limited to) AA, AAA and 9v batteries, rechargeable batteries and batteries from:

- mobile phones
- laptops
- hearing aids
- watches
- portable cameras
- torches
- electric toothbrushes
- razors
- hand-held vacuum cleaners

You do not need to take back car and motorbike batteries or batteries from industrial equipment.



Smaller retailers and distributors - if you sell less than 32kg batteries a year

- You do not have to take back used batteries if **you sell less than 32kg of batteries a year.**
- You can voluntarily take back batteries but you may have to arrange collection and transport yourself.
- Speak to a compliance scheme operator - they may offer a collection.
- You must follow the law on moving **hazardous waste** if you transport batteries yourself.
- You can find more information on the disposal of [hazardous waste here](#).

Communication toolkit - batteries assets

Recycle your batteries here

If you have old batteries, you can recycle them in-store for free



Batteries can be recycled and the materials inside turned into something new.

Simply drop off your old batteries for recycling here.



To find out more and for your local electrical recycling points, scan here or search recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/recycleinstore



We reserve the right to refuse an item that's too heavy to be picked up by one person or for health and hygiene reasons.

Ailgylchwch eich batris yma

Os oes gennych chi hen fatris, gallwch eu hailgylchu yn y siop am ddim



Gellir ailgylchu batris a throï y deunyddiau tu mewn yn rhywbeth newydd.

Gadewch eich hen fatris i'w hailgylchu yma.



I ddarganfod mwy ac i ddat o hyd i leoliad eich manau ailgylchu newyddau tydneol lleoli sganiwch yma neu ewch i recycleyourelectricals.org.uk/recycleinstore



Rydym yn cadw'r hawl i wrthod eitem sy'n rhy drwm i gael ei chodi gan un person neu am reymau techyd a hylendid.



Enforcement and compliance

OPSS has been appointed by Defra to enforce the regulations in the UK in relation to the:

- compliance of producers of automotive and industrial batteries
- take back scheme for distributors and retailers

Other aspects of the regulations are enforced by the Environment Agency and its equivalents in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulations-batteries-and-waste-batteries>

Failure to follow the regulations and carry out your duties may result in prosecution and a fine.

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/waste-batteries-producer-responsibility>

Further government guidance:

- [Waste Batteries: Producer Responsibilities](#)
- [Batteries: Distributor Responsibilities](#)
- [Batteries: Placing on the market guidance](#)
- [Waste Batteries: Technical Guidance](#)

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: How are Material Focus funded?

A: Our funding comes from UK WEEE Regulations Compliance Fees. These are paid by electrical producers if they don't meet annual recycling targets set by the government. The fees are set higher than the average costs of collections to encourage collections to take place. We manage spending of the fees to support reuse and recycling of electricals in the UK.

Q: Are Material Focus a regulator?

A: We are not a government body nor a regulator, and work separately to the regulators across the UK. But we will regularly share information with them to help improve the e-waste system - to make it as easy as possible for the public to reuse and recycle their electricals.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Is your work across the UK?

A: We work across the UK. We are a not-for-profit organisation with expertise in the electrical waste sector. Our role is to help improve the UK e-waste system through improving the reuse and recycling rates of waste electricals - this includes working with organisations across the UK sector to increase awareness of obligations and how to meet them.

Q: Who are the regulators in the UK?

A: Your relevant regulator is dependent on your company registered address location:

- **Environment Agency (England)**
- **Natural Resources Wales (Wales)**
- **Northern Ireland Environment Agency (Northern Ireland)**
- **Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (Scotland)**

Material Focus is an independent, not-for-profit organisation on a mission to save valuable, critical and finite materials inside electricals from going to waste. We do this through...

Insights

We identify, produce and share insights to improve the UK e-waste system and inform policy decisions.

Investments

We identify and fund projects that make it easier to reuse and recycle; or that encourage circular design.

Inspiration

We inspire, educate and encourage the UK public to fix, donate, sell and recycle their unwanted electricals through our Recycle Your Electricals campaign.

www.materialfocus.org.uk