

ISOPA's Position on the European Directives on Waste from the Electrical and Electronic Industry

INTRODUCTION

The following short description explains the ISOPA position on the Directives 2002/96/EC Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and 2002/95/EC Restriction of the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances (RoS directive).

RESTRICTION OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES: Hg, Pb, Cd, Cr (VI), PBDE and PBB

The members of ISOPA do not intentionally introduce in their raw materials nor in formulations sold any of the currently restricted hazardous substances.

OZONE DEPLETING SUBSTANCES (ODS)

These have been used in the past by the industry to achieve high efficiency insulation foams. Post consumer products at end of life and containing CFC should be treated as referred to in the Ozone Regulation 2037/2000. When dealing with old foam the residual content of ODS and related environmental problems should be taken into account.

Blowing agents used or recommended today by ISOPA member companies have a global warming potential lower than 15 and should not require any specific treatment. The treatment of End-of-Life foams should also take the requirements from the WEEE Directive (1) into account.

ACHIEVEMENT OF 80% AND 75 % RECOVERY AND RECYCLING QUOTA FOR REFRIGERATORS/FREEZERS BY 2006

ISOPA has done a broad investigation of the different means to achieve the reuse and recycling quotas. Plastics-producing industry has argued against excessive recycling quotas as they would be in conflict with the much more important environmental issue of global warming and energy efficiency. The positive contribution of the refrigeration sector to this environmental issue is significant, as highly efficient thermal insulating foam assists in reducing CO₂ emissions. It has been also shown by many studies that the impact of the end-of-life phase from any durable equipment, such as refrigerators, is rather small (typically < 7 %) compared to the overall lifetime environmental impact. The cost of the WEEE treatment is very high when viewed on a cost-benefit base. ISOPA is therefore advocating an eco-efficient approach to the end-of-life phase. This needs to take into account regional, national or even local conditions such as existing investments to reach these targets with a minimum cost based on local circumstances.

- ISOPA member companies do assist the industry in the compliance with the requirements of the WEEE in general and especially meeting the recycling and recovery quotas of 75 and 80 %; the ISOPA member companies see an all organic materials and an eco-efficient approach to comply with the take back of refrigerators as the best solution for the society.
- The path forward in this sector can be similar to the automotive sector where industry has started to organise cross stakeholder platforms (TecPol, Germany) to achieve a low cost high benefit solution for society.

Note (1): see requirements WEEE under annex II.2. "Equipment containing gases that are ozone depleting or have a global warming potential (GWP) above 15, such as those contained in foams and refrigeration circuits: the gases must be properly extracted and properly treated."



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