

NEWS RELEASE
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Countdown Underway to New Battery Recycling Scheme

WEEE Ireland, the national compliance scheme for waste electrical and electronic recycling, will launch a battery recycling scheme for battery retailers and the automotive industry in advance of the new battery recycling legislation which takes effect in Ireland on 26th September 2008.

Under the new regulations, any retail outlet which sells batteries will be obliged to provide facilities for the free take-back of all waste batteries of similar type sold at that outlet. Retailers must accept these batteries regardless of their origin and with no obligation on the consumer to purchase.

Batteries which fall under the scheme include portable batteries (AA, AAA, C, D, Button, power tools, mobile phone batteries, etc), batteries embedded in cordless electronic devices and automotive batteries.

WEEE Ireland's new scheme will involve establishing over 10,000 waste battery drop off points including retail outlets such as convenience stores, supermarkets, jewellers and hardware stores, as well as garages, motor factors, distributors, other stockists and civic amenity sites to facilitate consumers who wish to dispose of waste batteries.

WEEE Ireland will coordinate the collection of these waste batteries, and facilitate their sorting, treatment and recycling. It is estimated that over 2,000 tonnes of batteries are sold in Ireland each year – the equivalent in weight terms of 80 million AA batteries – with most being discarded in rubbish bins instead of being recycled due their small size.

“Batteries are one of the few products which traditionally have slipped through the recycling net. With the support of producers, retailers and trade associations in rolling out this new initiative, batteries of all kinds, including those in the automotive industry, can be deposited by consumers for free at specified drop-off points where WEEE Ireland will organise for their collection, treatment and safe recycling”, said Leo Donovan, CEO, WEEE Ireland.

Batteries will be collected by a permitted waste contractor and sent to a licensed treatment facility dedicated to battery recycling where they will go through a variety of processes aimed at recovering material for use again. Much of the original battery components (plastic, lead, and various metals) can be reused to produce new batteries, thus reducing the strain on natural resources.

About WEEE Ireland

WEEE Ireland is the largest of two authorised national compliance schemes for electrical and battery recycling. The scheme was founded in 2005 by producers of electrical and electronic appliances to comply with the WEEE

Directive. WEEE Ireland organises the processing and recycling of household waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) on behalf of its members from recycling centres, electrical retailers and other collection points covering over 80% of the geographic area of the Republic of Ireland.

Any household item that requires a plug or battery to function and is at the end of its life is considered waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE). Such items can be deposited at any of 80 civic amenity sites nationwide for free recycling. Location details and opening hours of recycling centres throughout the country are available at: www.weeeireland.ie. In addition, consumers can take back old electrical items to electrical retail shops when equivalent items are being purchased or bring their WEEE to one of the many public collection events WEEE Ireland runs throughout the country.

From 26th September, consumers will be able to dispose of old batteries at no charge at any of the 10,000 drop off points which will be established at retail and other outlets throughout the country. For further information on WEEE and battery recycling, log on to www.weeeireland.ie or contact operations@weeeireland.ie.

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