

6.0 Retailer take-back



Contents

6.1 Awareness of household take-back scheme	02
6.2 Store policies	02
6.2.1 In-store	02
6.2.2 On delivery of a new appliance	03
6.2.3 Online sales	03
6.2.4 Mobile phones	04
6.2.5 Third party recycling	04
6.3 Staff awareness	04
6.4 Servicing	05
6.5 Relationship with approved reuse organisations	05



Audience: This section of the guidance is of most interest to retailers of Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE).

Benefits: Retailers will benefit from the guidance by learning how to ensure they meet their obligations of the WEEE Regulations and how members of the public can learn what retailers should be doing to help them to recycle their WEEE.

Summary: How to raise awareness of WEEE recycling in-store, online and upon delivery are all considered in this section of the guidance. Takeback for large appliances has been in existence for many years and retailers provide this option to provide good customer service. For other WEEE groups, retail takeback is still in its infancy with awareness raising both of the public and staff being key to the successful increase of WEEE for reuse and recycling (both in-store and on delivery).

Further information is available from the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) on how they ensure retailers and distributors of electrical equipment play their part in helping household users to dispose of WEEE at the end of life.

The public should be advised by the retailer that takeback facilities are available either in store, upon delivery of a new appliance or by taking the unwanted item to a designated collection facility (usually the HWRC). This final option is only available to those retailers that are members of the **Distributor Takeback Scheme**.

A number of retailers have joined the Distributor Takeback Scheme, the funding from which goes to support local authority household waste recycling centres to improve WEEE waste collection facilities at these sites. Both the **Recycle More** and **Recycle Now** websites list all retailers that are members of the DTS. Retailers that are not on this list have not contributed to this fund and therefore are required to take back waste electronics from householders free of charge in all stores or upon delivery.

The **Recycle More** website can be used by all retailers to learn more about recycling in general and for DTS members to direct customers to their nearest designated collection facility (HWRC).

6.1 Awareness of household take-back scheme	02
6.2 Store policies	02
6.2.1 In-store	02
6.2.2 On delivery of a new appliance	03
6.2.3 Online sales	03
6.2.4 Mobile phones	04
6.2.5 Third party recycling	04
6.3 Staff awareness	04
6.4 Servicing	05
6.5 Relationship with approved reuse organisations	05

6.1 Awareness of household take-back scheme

As part of the WEEE regulations, retailers must make their customers aware of WEEE recycling options, in writing, upon request by a customer. Advice on the requirements is available from the VCA and the implementation will be monitored by the VCA mystery shoppers and if need be, enforcement officers.

It is good practice for retailers to display information, for example in the form of a poster, in a prominent position. If possible, a suitable sign should be placed at the entrance of the store. Examples of appropriate display positions include point of sale, customer service desk, refund desk (if different) in the technology or home department (if not exclusively an electrical store) and **online**.

There are materials available from Recycle Now that ensure there is a consistent message available to all customers through all retailers. The materials are similar to the Recycle Now consumer awareness campaign materials – building on the high consumer recognition of the brand.

6.2 Store policies

6.2.1 In-store

All retailers should provide in-store take back unless they are a member of the DTS. DTS members may also choose to accept WEEE through in-store takeback.

Retailers must make available information to comply with the WEEE Regulations regarding the routes that are available for recycling of WEEE.

When householders are aware they can recycle their WEEE through in-store take back schemes the volume of WEEE collected through this route will increase. At present the quantity of items returned is minimal in most cases.

Many stores have appropriate infrastructure at the back of the store to manage WEEE, for example warehouse staff will complete appropriate records, store items in crates which are loaded onto vehicles that are transporting manufacturer returns and other items to central distribution warehouses for onward clearance to a treatment facility. The same system can be used for storage and movement of WEEE.

Staff awareness can be improved to ensure that takeback schemes are promoted more widely by floor staff, checkout assistants and customer service staff. Retailer take-back **section 3** considers how this can be achieved.



6.1 Awareness of household take-back scheme	02
6.2 Store policies	02
6.2.1 In-store	02
6.2.2 On delivery of a new appliance	03
6.2.3 Online sales	03
6.2.4 Mobile phones	04
6.2.5 Third party recycling	04
6.3 Staff awareness	04
6.4 Servicing	05
6.5 Relationship with approved reuse organisations	05

6.2.2 On delivery of a new appliance

A number of retailers (including some that are members of the DTS) provide takeback for larger appliances when delivering new ones, often because it is an expected level of customer service.

Delivery crew have very good levels of customer service (as expected by the company) and therefore they treat the items to be removed with as much care as the items that are delivered.

There are good practice examples in the retail sector that can be copied by other parts of the industry. For example take-back of large WEEE upon delivery of new goods can be a good example for local authority bulky waste collections.

The retailer may provide an appointment day and time for delivery (and therefore collection) and may enter householders' property. In some instances instructions are provided for the householder such as unplug and defrost old freezers, or disconnect old washing machines (unless this is paid for as part of the service). The delivery crew may reuse the packaging from the items that have been delivered to protect the WEEE that is removed. The items are not stacked but they are secured in the vehicle for safe transit (and to protect new items that are on the same vehicle).

The WEEE is generally taken to a central depot or distribution centre where it is stored pending onward transportation. Depending on the arrangement with a third sector organisation (which should be an "approved" reuse operator), reusable items may be segregated and removed at this stage. Alternatively, the items are delivered to a treatment facility.

6.2.3 Online sales

Distance sellers, for example internet retailers, must either join the DTS, offer in-store take-back through one of their local stores (where these exist) or provide the customer with an alternative local route for free take-back. The distributor must tell customers how they can dispose of WEEE, for example via their catalogue, website, sales receipts, or through a leaflet included with the purchase.

Another source of information is available from WEEE Ireland, the compliance scheme in Ireland, which has developed a Code of Practice for Distance Sellers of EEE.



6.1 Awareness of household take-back scheme	02
6.2 Store policies	02
6.2.1 In-store	02
6.2.2 On delivery of a new appliance	03
6.2.3 Online sales	03
6.2.4 Mobile phones	04
6.2.5 Third party recycling	04
6.3 Staff awareness	04
6.4 Servicing	05
6.5 Relationship with approved reuse organisations	05

6.2.4 Mobile phones

Consumers are well aware of mobile phone recycling and will often return their phone to a retailer when upgrading to a newer model. It is rare that a store will liaise directly with the recycling facility or the company Environment Manager.

Mobile phones can also be returned either to the retailer or to a third party via post. Once again, specific plastic envelopes are provided for returning used phones. An example of this is **Debenhams**.

6.2.5 Third party recycling

Recycling and reuse can be provided by organisation with social and environmental objectives or asset management companies, for example mobile phone trade-in companies. One example is Redeem who use the Boots brand to provide consumers with loyalty card points in return for recycling their small WEEE. In this example, the consumer can return the item via post in either their own envelope or they can request one from Redeem.

6.3 Staff awareness

Inclusion of brief training materials in staff induction packs is good practice. For existing staff, short one-off training can be provided. Refresher courses and additional sessions to cover staff turnover and ensure all staff are provided training should be conducted periodically. Marks and Spencer provides staff with WEEE training which is specific to their procedures and refers to:

- legal obligations under the WEEE Regulations;
- the meaning of the crossed out wheelee bin symbol;
- the environmental impact of not recycling WEEE;
- the obligations in terms of takeback or DTS membership;
- where customers can recycle their WEEE (nearest DCF) and find out more information; and
- knowledge of Customer Information Poster and location(s).

EXAMPLE:

Marks and Spencer requires their Customer Assistants to complete a WEEE competency test, which is retained in the store compliance folder. Their training booklet must be completed to indicate that they have completed the Legal Compliance Knowledge Check which is subsequently attached to the Induction Training Record. Therefore there is evidence that staff have been trained which demonstrates good practice.

6.1 Awareness of household take-back scheme	02
6.2 Store policies	02
6.2.1 In-store	02
6.2.2 On delivery of a new appliance	03
6.2.3 Online sales	03
6.2.4 Mobile phones	04
6.2.5 Third party recycling	04
6.3 Staff awareness	04
6.4 Servicing	05
6.5 Relationship with approved reuse organisations	05

6.4 Servicing

As few items are returned to stores, storage back of store is not a problem. If items are received they are usually returned to the distribution centre along with WEEE items that have been collected direct from households. From the distribution centre WEEE is often collected by a treatment operator and taken to their facility. For example CREATE UK collect used white goods from the Dixons local distribution centre in Warrington.

Non-post consumer waste and manufacturer returns may also be returned to the distribution centre and therefore a store will request a back of store collection as and when required.

6.5 Relationship with approved reuse organisations

Reuse organisations often have formal contractual relationships with retailers to clear WEEE from the distribution centre or stores. The size of the organisation will affect the volume (number of items) that can be treated. Further information is available in the Treatment good practice guidance.



While steps have been taken to ensure its accuracy, WRAP cannot accept responsibility or be held liable to any person for any loss or damage arising out of or in connection with this information being inaccurate, incomplete or misleading. This material is copyrighted. It may be reproduced free of charge subject to the material being accurate and not used in a misleading context. The source of the material must be identified and the copyright status acknowledged. This material must not be used to endorse or used to suggest WRAP's endorsement of a commercial product or service. For more detail, please refer to our Terms & Conditions on our website – www.wrap.org.uk

Waste & Resources Action Programme

The Old Academy,
21 Horse Fair,
Banbury, Oxon
OX16 0AH

Tel: 01295 819 900

Fax: 01295 819 911

E-mail: info@wrap.org.uk

Helpline freephone

0808 100 2040

www.wrap.org.uk/WEEEGuidance



6.1 Awareness of household take-back scheme	02
6.2 Store policies	02
6.2.1 In-store	02
6.2.2 On delivery of a new appliance	03
6.2.3 Online sales	03
6.2.4 Mobile phones	04
6.2.5 Third party recycling	04
6.3 Staff awareness	04
6.4 Servicing	05
6.5 Relationship with approved reuse organisations	05

