

## RoHS / WEEE

April 2014

### **RoHS - Restriction of hazardous substances / WEEE - Collection and recycling of electrical and electronic equipment**

Companies selling electrical and electronic goods in the European Union must conform to the EU legislation for electrical and electronic equipments (EEE), which includes:

- The Restriction of Hazardous Substances Directive (RoHS), which bans the use of certain hazardous substances (such as lead, mercury, cadmium, hexavalent chromium and some polybrominated flame retardants) in EEE.
- The Waste and Electronic Equipment Directive (WEEE), which sets out the financial and other responsibilities of EEE producers with regard to the collection and recycling of waste from a broad range of EEE at their end of life.

Each Directive imposes obligations and outcomes that EU Member States must achieve. However, each Member State may choose the best framework to fulfill its obligations. Therefore, when selling within Europe, companies need to be mindful that national rules for implementing each Directive will differ from country to country.

### **Revisions of RoHS and WEEE Directives**

- The revised RoHS Directive was published on January 7, 2011, replacing the initial one from 2002 (2002/95/EC). Although it is also considered a "recast" Directive, it is more commonly known as the "RoHS II Directive".
- The revised WEEE Directive was published on July 24, 2012, replacing the initial one from 2002. (2002/96/EC). The new legislation is often called the "WEEE Recast Directive".

Seite 1 / 3

## RoHS / WEEE enforcement in Europe: country-by-country approach

The EU's RoHS and WEEE Directives are implemented in EU Member States countries by national RoHS and WEEE regulations, which differ considerably from country to country. Furthermore, countries like Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Turkey, which are not EU member states, have similar legislation in place.

However, in general producers are obliged:

- to label equipment, initially brought on the market in a member state of the European Union after August 13th, 2005, in such a way, that they clearly can be identified as producer.
- to disuse the heavy metals lead, mercury, hexavalent chromium and cadmium as well as brominated flame retardants from July 1st, 2006, on in new equipment. (RoHS)
- to participate in national recovery systems including registration to specific national registers, where applicable, prior bringing electrical or electronic equipment on the market. (WEEE)

## Sanitary fittings

Normally, sanitary fittings and systems are not falling under the definition of EEE - electrical or electronic equipment. However, some fittings and systems for drinking, shower or flushing water supply are partially equipped with electric and electronic components. These components serve for control and regulation of fitting functions. Some others are equipped with external control and regulation units for regulation of fittings or for other functions like illumination in a system combination with fittings.

## GROHE

### RoHS - Voluntary commitment for reduction of hazardous substances since 2006

Eventhough it was not very clear from the beginning and still is not clear, if sanitary fittings and systems are falling under the scope of the RoHS Directive, GROHE implemented appropriate provisions on reducing hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment on a voluntarily basis already before July 1st, 2006.

### WEEE - Registration of sanitary fittings and systems

Registration of sanitary fittings and systems with electrical and electronic components to national registers of waste electrical and electronic equipment and a corresponding participation in national recovery systems is being decided systematically at GROHE but in a case-by-case approach, due to the „borderline“ nature of the product portfolio.

## Background

### **RoHS, EC Directive 2011/66/EC replacing 2002/95/EC**

The abbreviation „RoHS“ (English: Restriction of the use of certain Hazardous Substances in electrical and electronic equipment) designates both, the EC Directive 2011/66/EC on the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment and as well the particular conversion into national legislation.

The objective is to ban problematic components in the products against the background of the massive increase of throw-away electronics. This includes, amongst others, establishing lead-free soldering of electronic components, restricting toxic flame retardants in cable production and reinforcing implementation of substitute products. Furthermore, electrical and electronic parts and components are supposed to be free of these materials, too.

### **WEEE, EC Directive 2012/19/EC replacing 2002/96/EC**

The abbreviation „WEEE“ (English: Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) designates both, the EC Directive 2012/19/EC on the reduction of the increasing amount of waste electrical and electronic equipment and as well the particular conversion into national legislation.

The objective is prevention, minimisation and environmentally sound disposal of increasing volumes of electro waste through extended producer responsibility (=> producer take-back obligation).

