

MINI

FAQ

Revised edition ▶ March 2003

The European Legislation on WEEE and RoHS

FAQ

Table of contents

What does the emerging European legislation on WEEE and RoHS mean for Brominated Flame Retardants?

What is the WEEE Directive ? ▶	2
What is the impact of the WEEE Directive for BFRs ? ▶	2
What are the benefits of the WEEE Directive for BFRs ? ▶	4
When do the recycling requirements for WEEE start in Europe ? ▶	5
What is the RoHS Directive ? ▶	5
Which BFRs will be banned in the RoHS Directive ? ▶	6
Are other BFRs going to be banned in Europe ? ▶	7
When does the ban come into force ? ▶	7

What is the WEEE Directive?

The Directive on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) aims to increase the recycling and recovery of WEEE through mechanical recycling, feedstock recycling and energy recovery. The Directive will require separation of most of E&E Equipment from unsorted waste in Europe. This E&E waste will then be collected, recycled and re-used under the financial responsibility of manufacturers.

What is the impact of the WEEE Directive for BFRs?

The Directive on WEEE will require the separation of plastics containing brominated flame retardants (BFRs) prior to recycling, energy recovery or disposal. In practice, in many EU countries separation of all flame-retardant plastics will be required for WEEE. For example, this is already a legislative requirement in Denmark.

By 31 December 2006, the Directive requires to separate at least 4 kg of WEEE per inhabitant per year from usual waste stream.

Out of this collected WEEE, manufacturers of "IT & Telecommunication equipment" (computers, fax, telephone, copiers, printer) and "consumer equipment" (TV, radio) will have, by 31 December 2006, to:

- recover (i.e. recycling plus energy recovery) a minimum of 75% by an average weight per appliance
- re-use and recycle component, material and substance of a minimum 65% by an average weight per appliance

What are the benefits of the WEEE Directive for BFRs ?

The Directive's requirement to increase mechanical recycling is an advantage for plastics containing BFRs as they offer high level of stability during the recycling process.

The separation requirement will in turn facilitate the recycling and recovery of plastics containing BFRs for which there is a wide range of tested recycling and recovery technologies.

When do the Recycling Requirements for WEEE start in Europe ?

European Member States have to set up E&E waste collection facilities by 13 August 2005. Individual Member States are already starting to put their legislative frameworks in place.

E&E manufacturers or recyclers acting on their behalf, will have to reach recovery and recycling targets of the collected E&E waste (see details on page 3) by 31 December 2006. This requires action now in order to ensure that future WEEE meets the new requirements for recyclability and recoverability in time with the 2006 deadline.

What is the RoHS Directive ?

This European Directive aims to phase-out the use of some substances deemed to be hazardous in the electrical and electronic equipment.

Which BFRs will be banned in the RoHS Directive ?

The EU Directive to restrict hazardous substances from E&E, will only ban PBB, Penta-BDE, and Octa-BDE out of the 75 brominated flame retardants, from the production of new E&E equipment from 1st July 2006.

Another flame retardant, Deca-BDE, is included within the same EU Directive, but benefits from a potential derogation from a restriction, depending on the finalisation of an EU scientific study, which is expected by mid 2003.

The importance of the RoHS Directive for Deca-BDE is that individual EU Member States will have to wait until 1 July 2006 to introduce the restrictions under the RoHS Directive, thus maintaining the cohesion of the EU Single Market for electrical and electronic products. The EU will therefore base its decision for Deca-BDE on scientific risk assessment.

Are other BFRs going to be banned in E&E in Europe ?

No. In fact the RoHS Directive gives producers a clear guarantee that no individual EU Member State will be able to introduce separate bans or restrictions on any other substance than those specified in the RoHS Directive.

A review of the RoHS Directive to potentially integrate new substances to be phased-out will only take place from 2005. This review will of course look at all substances of concern.

When does the ban come into force ?

The Directive proposal on RoHS phasing-out PBB, Penta-BDE and Octa-BDE from the production of new E&E applications, will start on 1st July 2006.

Individual EU Member States will not be able to adopt earlier bans nor will they be allowed to adopt isolated bans of other substances.

However, another EU Directive proposal, currently being discussed, will ban the flame retardants Penta-BDE and Octa-BDE in all products from the European market by 15 August 2004.

For more information about the fire safety benefits of brominated flame retardants, additional information on environmental issues and to find out about bromine and its applications please visit our website.



The BSEF website provides extensive scientific information on bromine and brominated products. BSEF's presence in the EU, the US and Asia-Pacific ensures that up-to-date relevant information can be made quickly available through this site e.g. the latest developments on EU proposals such as those on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment.

Useful websites for further information

Fire Safety

<http://www.bfrl.nist.gov/fris/>
<http://www.vtt.fi/rte/firetech/>
<http://www.acfse.org>
<http://www.firemarshals.org>

Science

<http://www.webelements.com>

Flame Retardant Industry

<http://www.ebfrip.org>
<http://www.cefic-efra.org>
<http://www.roskill.co.uk>

<http://www.albemarle.com>
<http://www.deadseabromine.com>
<http://www.greatlakeschem.com>
<http://www.tosoh.com>



Secretariat

118 Avenue de Cortenbergh

1000 Brussels

Belgium

Tel. +32 2 733 93 70

Fax. +32 2 735 60 63

E-mail: mail@bsef.com

Website: www.bsef.com