

HookedOnRecycling.com Investigates The Impact of New Battery Recycling Rules



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New Battery Recycling Rules Receive Positive and Negative Reviews On February 1st new European Legislation was introduced governing the recycling of batteries but already manufacturers are making noises of discontent.

Under the new EU laws, retail stores selling over 32kg of batteries a year must provide in-store recycling bins to encourage battery recycling. But manufacturers complain that the £3million bill for disposal and lack of consumer awareness make the new legislation flawed.

Currently, the UK recycles 3% of the 600 million batteries sold, meaning over half a billion batteries end up in UK landfill sites every year. Such a large amount of batteries going to landfill is a major concern for household environmentalists and Defra, as batteries can leak toxic substances such as cadmium into ground water. [Mobile phone recycling](#) companies have taken over our television sets of late to help capitalize on the recycling bandwagon. But despite this, in only the first month of the new legislation, battery manufacturers are already voicing their frustration with the recycling initiative. Vince Armitage, divisional vice-president at Varta, said: "The directive places the responsibility of meeting its stringent collection and recycling targets on the manufacturer, but it relies on the awareness of consumers to make it work."

And it's not just manufacturers that believe awareness is a major issue, with Bob Gordon from the British Retail Consortium asking for a "comprehensive and continuing Government information campaign."

There's no doubting that recycling awareness in the UK is lower than in some of our close EU neighbour countries. Figures from Defra suggest that UK households are only recycling 17% of 30.5 million tonnes of waste compared to over 50% on the continent. However companies that offer [cash for old mobile phone](#) batteries are proving to be popular and helping the recycling initiative.

The campaign for awareness becomes even louder when you consider the findings of recent battery recycling research conducted by waste and resources organisation WRAP:

- An estimated 30,000 tonnes of batteries enter the UK market each year.
- 22,000 tonnes (or 110 Jumbo Jets) worth of household batteries (including mobile phones) end up in landfill unnecessarily every year
- 9 out of 10 people would recycle if there were a kerb-side collection scheme

With these figures firmly in their minds, the EU Council and Defra will no-doubt be hoping for support from public-eye recycling campaigners such as <http://www.Love2Recycle.com> to help build awareness and get the message across.

With help from third party campaigners, the new legislation does stand a good chance of increasing battery recycling and has strong support from the Government's 'Battery Compliance Scheme' reports [HookedOnRecycling](#). The scheme enables retailers to get their recycle bins emptied free of charge, allowing stores of all sizes to have a recycle point with no extra overheads incurred.

A strong supporter of the scheme is the Environment Secretary, Hilary Benn, who said: "This new legislation will make it easier for consumers to do the right thing whilst ensuring retailers fulfill their part of the bargain."

Even at just 17%, the UK is now recycling more than ever before and sustainable waste management is becoming an increasing part of our day-to-day lives. This receptive attitude combined with the new battery recycling laws, may well place a spotlight on an area of household recycling that can make a huge environmental difference.

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