



Summary

2008 – RECYCLING: WHERE THE END IS JUST THE BEGINNING

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Dutch Foundation for the Disposal of Metalelectro Products (NVMP). Thanks to our efforts, consumers are now familiar with the disposal levy and visit their municipal recycling centre several times per year. Great numbers of discarded electrical and electronic appliances are processed each year in an environmentally friendly manner. In short, the Netherlands can be proud to have one of the most stable, efficient and cost-efficient e-waste collection systems in Europe.

Yet there is no reason to let up, because even as NVMP develops as an implementation organisation, the world changes faster around it. That means that we need to further adapt our systems and processes.

NVMP strives to achieve maximum collections. In doing so, we hope to exceed the goals arising from the environmental policy and legislation. It became clear from research last year that successful collection of discarded appliances is being inhibited by a number of factors.

First, there is the fact that the consumer – the primary ‘disposer’ – often doesn’t separate small appliances for recycling, but rather offers them as waste.

There is also a growing circuit of informal collection (against a certain fee) by scrap dealers, who sometimes partly recycle the appliances (‘cherry picking’), and partly export them, illegally, under the flag of ‘reuse.’ These complementary flows turn out to be fed both by retailers and municipalities, which otherwise also do business with recognised recyclers that fall outside NVMP registration.

It is clear that all of this has a strong negative influence on effective and responsible disposal by NVMP.

In the coming year, NVMP wants to take steps to reduce the problems outlined above with targeted actions, as this is expected to lead to a directly measurable increase in the collection amounts. As far as consumer awareness is concerned, this needs to be done with effective campaigns, in connection with Wecycle or otherwise. Regarding the reduction of the complementary flows, agreements need to be made with municipalities and with industry organisations in retail trade.

A higher-quality process

In recent years, much time and energy has been invested in making good contractual agreements with transporters and recyclers. Virtually all of these performance contracts will be renewed at the end of 2009. Last year, in preparation for these new rounds of negotiation, a strategic document was drawn up that gives us a better handle on new tendering procedures. NVMP now has a ‘tool’ to perform this evaluation, which was developed in house. By comparing several dealers with one another, and then following their performances, both the efficiency and the quality of the system can be guaranteed as much as possible.

The last year has also provided new insights relating to the NVMP recycling optimisation models (MARAS – Material Recycling and Sustainability). The results of MARAS are not only of great value to NVMP, but also to other collection systems. More intensive collaboration with Stibat, ICT Milieu and Nedvang, in the fields of research, participant registration and financial management, for example, remain an important attention point, considering that this clearly contributes to the efficiency and effectiveness of our collection and recycling system.

Current, reliable information

As a service-providing organisation, the NVMP should optimally justify itself. In recent years, a lot of energy has been put into improving the ICT infrastructure. Organising an in-house data warehouse will eventually lead not only to more reliable data, but to information also being available considerably more quickly.



In addition, there will certainly be attention for the service aspect, in consideration of the participating organisations, such as lowering the administrative costs, making it possible to give statements online and streamlining the processes – enabling combined declarations, for example.

Communication: Wecycle and beyond

Although communication with stakeholders isn't one of NVMP's core activities, NVMP does play an important supporting role in the implementation of the – growing – communications needs of its clients. Besides taking care of the quarterly Retour publications, this support also took shape with statements relating to the Wecycle communication concept, which was again collectively supported by the various product foundations in 2008. Two high-profile television commercials and a national print campaign have successfully publicised Wecycle to the general public.

WEEE Forum and harmonisation

In 2008, NVMP again made an active contribution to the WEEE Forum, the European association of collection systems. As a 'knowledge organisation,' the WEEE Forum is receiving growing recognition in the Brussels circuit. Reliable data forms the foundation for this role, which NVMP is regularly called on to fill. The start of the WEEELABEX project (WEEE Label of Excellence) also cannot go unmentioned. This project will provide a series of harmonised recycling standards and directives for managing, reporting and monitoring the different waste flows.

Legislation: WEEE Directive reviewed

At the beginning of December 2008, the blueprint for the reviewed WEEE Directive was submitted to the European Parliament. The long-awaited suggestions contain a few elements, however, to which both NVMP and product foundations have strong objections. The biggest objection is to the European Commission's suggestion to make manufacturers responsible for fully financing the collection of appliances from individual households. This would extend manufacturer responsibility to the doorstep, which has huge financial and logistical implications. The lack of concrete measures to combat leakage flows and the few realistic collection goals are also causes for concern. Clearly, the progress of this process will be followed with the greatest possible attention.

