



POSITION PAPER OLD-FOR-SIMILAR-NOTHING

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SUMMARY

The NVMP Association advocates broadening the collection of e-waste by retailers so that consumers can submit waste equipment at any store which sells similar items, even if they do not purchase a new one.

It opposes mandatory testing of submitted equipment by retailers for the determination of its suitability for reuse.

The NVMP Association would assume responsibility for quick collection of equipment accepted by the retailer so that the space occupied by the collected e waste is kept to a minimum.

Under contract with Dutch manufacturers and importers, Wecycle strives to collect and responsibly recycle the greatest possible amount of waste electrical and electronic equipment and low-energy lamps ('e-waste'). For the collection, Wecycle collaborates intensively with municipalities, charity shops, schools and retailers (see www.wecycle.nl).

At present, the retail sector accepts equipment for recycling on the basis of the **old-for-new** principle: when a customer purchases a new appliance, an old similar article may be brought to the shop. The retailer receives compensation from Wecycle, which picks up the e-waste and has it processed.

The European Commission, Council and Parliament reached an agreement on 20 December 2011 concerning the revision of the WEEE Directive. Retailers that sell equipment in shops in which at least 400 m² is used for the sale of electrical and electronic equipment are required to accept small appliances (with outside dimensions not exceeding 25 cm) submitted for recycling at no charge without any obligation for the purchase of a new one (**old-for-nothing**). Exceptions can be made if there are other (equally effective) collection options.

Objections of the retail sector

Retailers in the Netherlands have objections to this proposed broadening of their collection responsibilities from the old-for-new to the old-for-nothing principle. The retailers fear that their workload will increase. Collection, testing and sorting of submitted equipment requires scarce shop space, can in their view result in unhygienic or even hazardous situations and can have a negative impact on the appearance of the shop.

The retail sector fears circumstances beyond their control if consumers can 'dump' their electronics, as well as large appliances such as combination refrigerator-freezers, at any shop of their choosing. The chemist that sells electric toothbrushes is afraid he will be presented with an old CRT television on his counter.

NVMP standpoint

The NVMP Association feels that a retailer should only be required to accept discarded equipment of the type sold new in that shop. In other words, a phone shop should not be required to accept refrigerators, but it should accept old mobile phones, even when a new one is not being purchased.

This **old-for-similar-nothing** arrangement will increase the number of submission locations for e-waste by around 5000 in one go and will make it much easier for the consumer to submit items – particularly small electric appliances and low-energy lamps – for recycling. Currently, 33 million kilograms of this small e-waste disappears into rubbish bins every year.

The NVMP Association, like retailers, is opposed to testing for reusability as part of the collection and processing scheme, and feels it is primarily the consumers' responsibility to submit equipment for reuse.

The NVMP Association will ensure that the collected equipment and lamps are picked up quickly in order to keep the storage and space this requires to a minimum.

About the NVMP Association

The NVMP Association was established in 1999 and represents 1500 manufacturers and importers of electrical equipment and low-energy lighting in the Netherlands. These manufacturers and importers have established the first national system in the world for the responsible collection and sustainable processing of electrical appliances and low-energy lighting. The implementation thereof has been entrusted to the non-profit organisation Wecycle.

For more information

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A decorative image at the bottom of the page showing various pieces of electronic waste, such as a broken monitor and other components, with a blue and green color scheme.