

## Electronic Waste (e-Waste) Terms and Definitions Legislation and Directives

- **Basel Convention:** A convention that was put in place in 1992 and has been signed by 172 countries. The goal of the convention is to stop the trans-boundary movements of hazardous waste, which includes electronic waste in an effort to protect human health and the environment. The Basel Convention aims is to halt developed countries' exporatation of waste to underdeveloped countries. Although most countries in the world have signed and ratified the Basel Convention, the United States has not. (Additional information is available at <http://www.basel.int/>)
- **Ban Amendment to the Basel Convention:** An amendment proposed to the Basel Convention that would ban hazardous waste exports for final disposition or recycling from developed to underdeveloped countries. (See <http://www.basel.int/pub/baselban.html> for more information)
- **Cathode Ray Tube (CRT) Rule:** CRT is the glass video display component of an electronic device (usually a computer or television monitor). Under the CRT Rule, unbroken used CRTs are regulated as hazardous waste if they are stored for more than a year. Broken CRTs are treated as hazardous waste, unless certain conditions are met. These include: (1) being stored and transported in clearly labeled containers designed to minimize releases, and (2) being stored less than a year before recycling. CRTs being processed for glass must meet these same requirements to remain unregulated as hazardous waste, plus they must be processed inside a building at a temperature low enough to prevent the lead in the glass from being volatized (vaporized). Anyone exporting CRTs, broken or unbroken, for recycling, must notify the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA). (See <http://www.epa.gov/waste/hazard/recycling/electron/index.htm#crt> and <http://www.sustainelectronics.illinois.edu/CRTRule.pdf> for more information)
- **Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA):** Controls the disposal of solid and hazardous waste in the United States and gives the U.S. EPA the power to control hazardous waste from “cradle to grave”. Enacted in 1976. (More information at <http://www.epa.gov/lawsregs/laws/rcra.html>)
- **Restriction of Use of Certain Hazardous Substances (RoHS):** Bans manufacturers from using certain toxic materials in electronics if they wish to sell them to the European Union. Enacted in 2006. (Additional information at <http://www.rohs.gov.uk/>)
- **S1397:** A proposed Senate Bill, whose purpose is to create data and research centers that would be awarded U.S. EPA funding for electronic device research, development, demonstration projects, education and other purposes. The bill would grant a total of \$85 million. (You can read the document online at



<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=s111-1397>)

- **WEEE Directive:** The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (2002/96/EC). This European Union legislation requires manufacturers of electrical and electronic equipment to provide free collection and recycling of said equipment. See the European Commission WEEE page. ([http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/weee/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/waste/weee/index_en.htm)) and the UK NetRegs (<http://www.netregs.gov.uk/netregs/topics/WEEE/default.aspx>) site for more information on specific requirements and exemptions.
- **WEEE Recast:** This refers to the fact that the WEEE Directive is in the process of being rewritten due to complications in compliance. For example, since all electrical devices (defined in the European Union as any items with plugs) are included in the directive, some manufacturers could circumvent recycling standards for equipment that are based on weight in ways that the standards did not intend. Thus, this is not supporting the sort of recycling and recovery that is most desired. A cell phone manufacturer, for instance, could much more easily meet a requirement for recycling X number of pounds of electrical and electronic equipment within a given time frame by collecting refrigerators rather than cell phones. (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0810:FIN:en:PDF> and <http://www.orgalime.org/Pdf/PP%20WEEE%20Recast%20Proposal%20Jun09.pdf>)

