

ITAD Global Regulation & Compliance: A Quiet Summer for E-Scrap Laws, With Progress on Repair, Packaging and Enforcement

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July and August did not bring a major new e-scrap statute in the United States, Europe or Asia. The consequential developments involved measures moving into application: EU repair rights and packaging obligations, Southeast Asian enforcement of waste-import restrictions, and further state-level repair and EPR activity in the United States. For ITAD and recycling industry stakeholders, the period reinforced policy priorities around product life, battery safety, packaging responsibility and cross-border electronics shipments.

Repair moves into application

The most consequential European development for reuse markets arrived July 31, when the EU's right-to-repair rules began applying. The framework covers technically repairable household and electronic products, including mobile phones, tablets, washing machines and vacuum cleaners. Consumers may request repair from manufacturers, which must be offered free of charge or at a reasonable price and within a reasonable timeframe. Choosing repair instead of replacement during the seller-liability period extends the legal guarantee by at least 12 months.

For ITAD industry stakeholders, the measure does not create a direct processing mandate, but it strengthens the policy case for repair-first disposition. Equipment that might otherwise move quickly to parts harvesting or recycling may instead be considered for testing, repair, redeployment and resale. That makes operational triage more important. Providers need to distinguish among reuse as-is, repair for resale, components recovery, material recovery and destruction, giving a competitive advantage to companies with established testing, data erasure, refurbishment and resale capabilities as repair and product-life expectations become more embedded in the market.

Packaging obligations take effect

A second major EU milestone arrived Aug. 12, when the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation, or PPWR, began to apply generally. The regulation covers packaging and packaging waste placed on the EU market, regardless of material or origin. It includes requirements related to packaging design, composition, recovery, reuse and waste prevention. In the ITAD context, PPWR is an adjacent rather than direct WEEE obligation. Electronics reuse and resale operations generate substantial packaging flows, including inbound returns, protective packing, reusable transport materials, outbound shipments and cross-border fulfillment.

The central compliance question will be which company is considered the packaging producer or importer in each market. ITAD firms should assess their roles in placing packaging on the market, registration, reporting and fee obligations, and make sure customer and logistics agreements assign responsibilities clearly.

Malaysia enforcement becomes tangible

Asia's clearest summer development was Malaysia's more visible enforcement of its e-waste import restrictions. Malaysia's full e-waste import ban took effect April 1. By early July, authorities operating under Op Green Shield had inspected 685 containers and repatriated 143 containers holding about 3,057 metric tons of e-waste. Hundreds of additional containers were reportedly scheduled to be returned in stages.

For the sub-segment of ITAD operating as exporters, brokers and downstream vendors, the practical significance is substantial. An import restriction that could previously have appeared largely administrative is becoming a shipment, documentation and supply-chain risk. Companies moving used electronics or electronics scrap through Southeast Asia are now experiencing a tightening set of regulations, and need to ensure product condition, reuse status, waste classification, customs declarations and receiving-facility credentials can withstand inspection. Legitimate reuse shipments and improperly characterized end-of-life material are likely to receive greater scrutiny.

Cambodia also reinforced its existing prohibition on imports of e-waste and waste batteries during the period, directing provincial and municipal authorities to step up enforcement. That was an enforcement reminder rather than a new law. It adds to the regional direction

of travel: Southeast Asian governments are increasingly resistant to becoming destinations for poorly documented or misdeclared end-of-life electronics.

Vietnam's Circular No. 24/2026/TT-BNNMT was also relevant to the regional compliance picture, although it was issued in May rather than during the summer. The circular provides implementation detail for producer and importer recycling and waste-management responsibilities, including financial-contribution rates, compliance mechanisms and procedures supporting recycling and waste-treatment activities.

Battery rule remains limited

On July 14, the European Commission adopted a delegated act concerning portable-battery removability and replaceability. The measure would add six product categories to exemptions from the general requirement that consumers be able to remove and replace portable batteries.

The affected categories include some wearables, including smartwatches and fitness trackers, electric toys and certain equipment designed for use in explosive atmospheres. The measure had not yet completed European Parliament and Council scrutiny or been published in the Official Journal.

Its relevance is narrower than the repair and packaging measures, but it remains operationally useful for recyclers and ITAD providers. Battery management increasingly needs to occur at the device level. Some batteries may be consumer-accessible, while others require independent professional removal, trained technicians, appropriate equipment and documented dismantling procedures.

U.S. policy remains state-led

U.S. developments remained fragmented and largely state-led. Connecticut's repair law took effect July 1, adding to a wider state-level policy trend linking repair access with waste prevention and consumer protection.

Packaging EPR program deadlines and implementation work also continued in states including Washington and California. But the period did not produce a major new federal electronics-recycling statute.



The summer's more significant developments came from rules and restrictions moving into practical effect. Repair rights and packaging regulation are broad EU changes. Malaysia's enforcement campaign shows the commercial consequences of tighter controls on cross-border waste shipments. These developments increase the importance of repair capability, product classification, battery-handling procedures, packaging compliance and shipment documentation across the electronics circular economy.

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