



## Foundation

Swico Recycling was set up on 1<sup>st</sup> December 1993 by a majority of the members of the Swico Association, Zurich Switzerland (Swiss Association of suppliers for Information, Communications and Organisation Technology) as a voluntary system. It was a reaction to increasing demands expressed by customers to be able to hand in equipment irrespective of the brand without any problems at a single location, and the realisation by importers and manufactures that a common system would be preferable on the grounds of efficiency.

## Start of operation – development - WEEE categories covered

The solution came into force on 1 April 1994 for the Office Technology and IT sectors. In the beginning, 36 companies were involved. More sectors have since been added – see following - and the solution now boasts some 500 members.

1999: mobile phones

2000: the graphics industry

2001: telephone equipment and switchboards

2002: consumer electronics and photographic equipment

2004: dental equipment

2005: medical and measuring equipment

2006: electronic music instruments, building security

As second system in Switzerland the Foundation Disposal Switzerland (SENS) deals with large and small household equipment.

Through Swico Recycling, manufacturers and importers participating in the system assume responsibility for the products up to the recycling. They are responsible for the entire system and control it via the Swico Environmental Commission, to which they send delegates. The system's four guarantees are as following:

- an ecological solution
- a country-wide concept for taking back equipment
- control over the recycling companies and their customers
- secure financing

Responsibilities within the system are clearly classified in the following categories: manufacturers, the trade (distributors and retailers), logistics companies and recycling companies.

## Legal background

On 1 July 1998 the ORDEE came into force (Ordinance on the return, the taking back and the disposal of electrical and electronic equipment). It has been amended to incorporate tighter regulations with effect as of 1 January 2005, and pursues the same objectives as the European WEEE Directive.

The ORDEE is made up of responsibilities at five different levels:

1. Consumers must hand in used equipment to the trade.
2. Distributors, retailers and manufacturers must take back used equipment free of charge (even if no new equipment is purchased).
3. Distributors, retailers and manufactures must professionally dispose of equipment that is taken back.
4. Recycling companies must be in possession of a cantonal license.
5. Exporters must be in possession of a license issued by the federal authorities.

## Collection system

Thanks to the country-wide concept for taking back equipment, business customers and private individuals can hand in their used equipment and accessories free of charge at

- distributors or retailers premises (6000),
- some 600 Swico collection points,
- the manufacturers' premises (large-scale equipment)

or they can arrange for quantities of used equipment of 250 kg and more to be picked up by the Swico Recycling operators directly.

## Amounts collected

The amount of equipment returned under the scope of Swico Recycling can be found on [www.swicorecycling.ch](http://www.swicorecycling.ch). The manufacturers, distributors or retailers or the end users are responsible for the reuse of used equipment (before recycling).

## Financing system

The expenses are financed via the advance recycling fees (ARF), which manufacturers collect on new equipment and make available to the system. This means that consumers pay a contribution towards recycling costs when they purchase new equipment. Consequently they can hand in used equipment free of charge irrespective of its age. The fees are published so that consumers are familiar with the contribution they are making.

The ARF imposed on equipment also finance the cost of disposing of packaging material used for new equipment as well as the recycling of batteries.

Swico Recycling recognizes the status of the "individual system" as well as the "common system". Consequently individual companies can administer the financial funds themselves, and directly carry the recycling costs.

Neither manufacturers nor the Swico Environmental Commission pursue a profit objective through Swico Recycling, i.e. all funds resulting from the ARF are used solely to finance the system for taking back equipment and for recycling.

## Logistic system

A contract with a logistic coordinator is ensuring a 24 hours service for the take back of old equipment all over Switzerland especially from the trade and business customers. Besides this, recyclers can use their own logistic system for synergy reasons.

## Treatment partners and technical control

Contracted recycling companies perform the task of recycling used WEEE equipment. These companies collaborate with dismantling companies that employ staff in social welfare institutions.

The recycling industry is invited to respond on a recycling tender and quantities will be based on best price/quality offer. This ensures free competition. The same is done for the logistics activities.

An external control office (EMPA St. Gallen) monitors the recycling quality by order of the Swico Environmental Commission. Contracts with recycling companies are only entered into if they can honor the requirements in accordance with the Swico regulations. EMPA is also responsible for making proposals to the Environmental Commission on the available level of technology, which should be requested.

## Contact

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