

OPERATING A VAPE RECYCLING SERVICE IN YOUR SHOP

Vapes are no longer part of the Distributor Takeback Scheme (DTS). As a result, all retailers selling vapes must offer their customers a recycling bin for vaping products.

This guidance outlines how retailers can collect used vapes in store, store them safely and arrange collections on a regular basis.

Enforcement action against retailers who do not comply with the regulations began in April 2024.

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Retailers Who Sell Vapes Must Provide Vape Recycling Bins

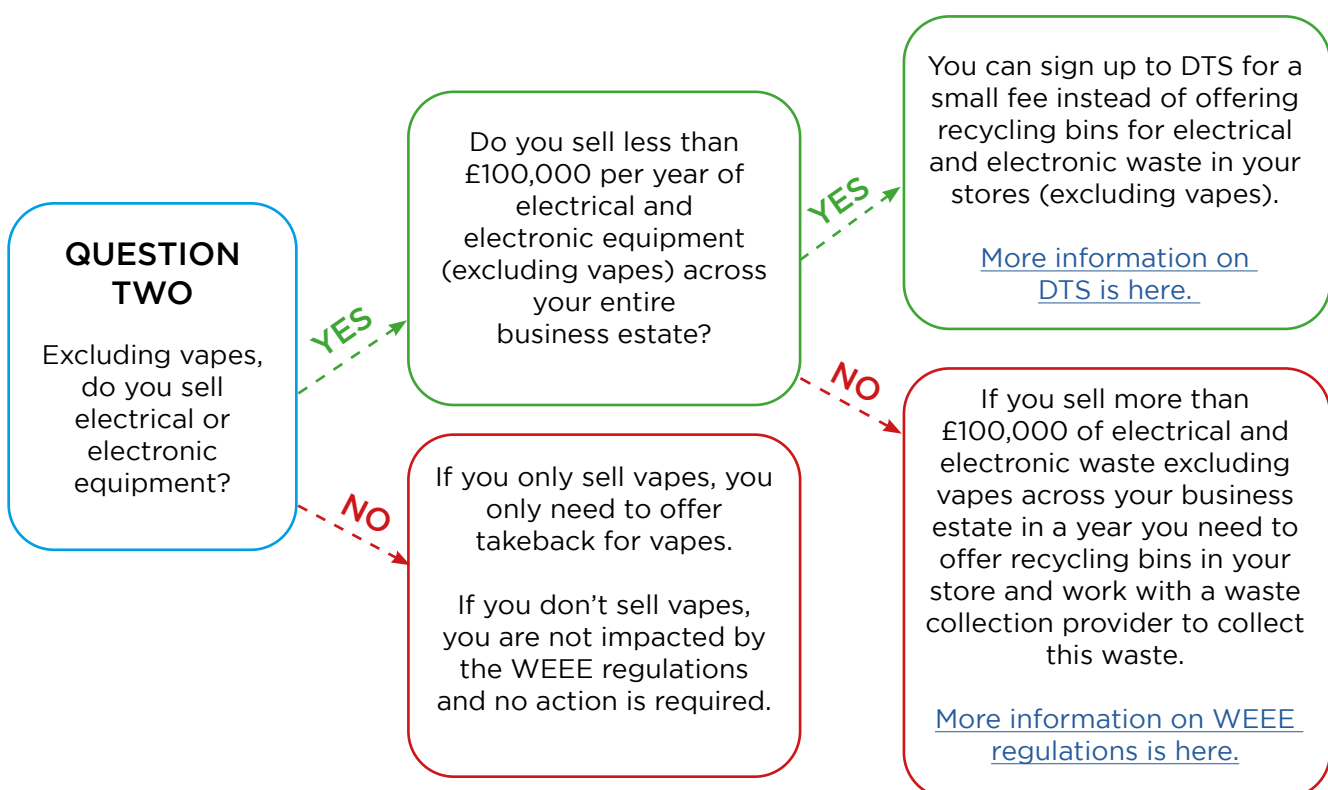
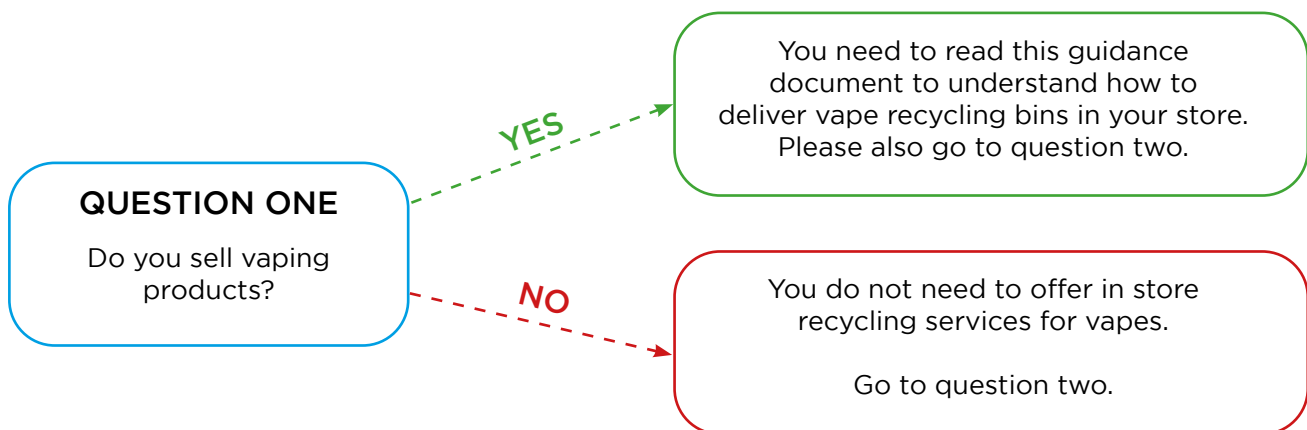
The Government has decided that vapes will no longer be part of the Distributor Takeback Scheme.

This change in government policy means **ALL RETAILERS SELLING VAPES must offer their customers a recycling bin for vaping products. Enforcement action started in April 2024.**

This guidance document aims to explain how convenience retailers operating in the UK can offer vape recycling bins in their stores and be compliant with the WEEE regulations.

What do I need to do next?

Answer question 1 and question 2 to work out what you need to do next.



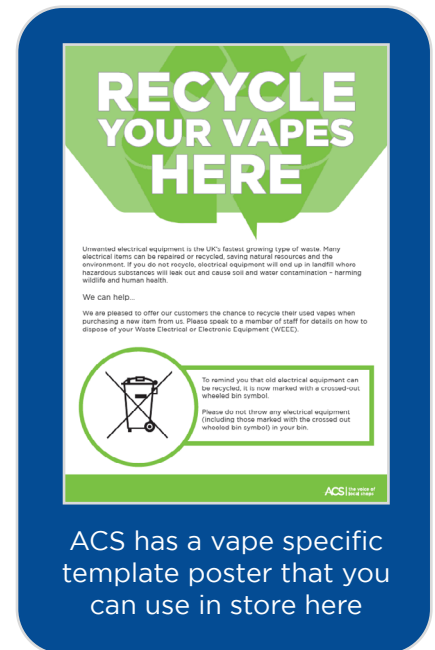
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Displaying Information in Stores

You must make information available to customers in your stores about the vape collection service you offer and how it can be used. The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) have developed a template poster [you can use here](#).

If you make your own poster then it must include the following information:

- The need to minimize WEEE waste in the municipal waste stream and secure high levels of collection rates
- The collection and takeback services available to customers
- How you are contributing to the reuse, recycling and other forms of recovery of WEEE
- The potential effects on the environment and human health as a result of the presence of hazardous substances in EEE
- The meaning of the crossed out wheeled bin symbol shown here:



Taking Back Vapes in Stores

You must offer to takeback vapes that offer the same functions of the vapes that you sell in your store. The type of vape is determined by functionality not brand. If you sell only one brand of disposable vapes then it follows that you will have to accept returns of all types of disposables vapes. Under the WEEE regulations, the return of vapes to stores happens on a “one for one” basis. This means that you only have to take back vapes in your recycling bin when a customer is buying an equivalent vape in your store.

You cannot charge customers for taking back their vapes. The service must be free of charge.



ILLCIT VAPES



If a customer tries to return an illicit vape to your store you can refuse to accept it.

The WEEE regulations state that electrical equipment returned must be an equivalent type and fulfil the same function as the supplied equipment.

[\(WEEE Regulations 2013 42.1\)](#)

Illicit vapes are not equivalent to the vapes you will sell and therefore should not be accepted in your recycling collection points.

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Storing Vapes

Vapes should be stored in a separate container in a cool dry place away from windows and direct sunlight, and away from other electrical and electronic equipment you store for takeback. You can only store the used vapes temporarily, generally no longer than three months.

There is no regulatory requirement for a specific vape container. Tube containers, widely used for battery collection, can be used for storing vapes, but it is recommended that vapes are stored separately from batteries and other electronic and electrical equipment.

Arranging Collection of Vapes from your Stores

You must dispose of the vapes you collect in your store properly so they can be recycled. You will have to contact a provider of vape collection services to collect vapes from your store.

Vape collection service providers offer a wide range of services at different prices. You can get more information about vape providers from the following locations:

- [Registers of electrical and electronic equipment \(EEE\) producer compliance schemes](#). This is the government's register of producer compliance schemes providers. Many will offer vape collection services.
- Some vape suppliers have their own schemes to collect vapes for recycling. We recommend that retailers make contact with their own vape supplier to understand what bin and collection services they offer

Retailers can get their own waste carrier license to transport vapes themselves, but this not covered in this guidance document. [More information is available here](#).

Record Keeping

You need to record information about the number of vaping units you collect through takeback in store and the number collected by your vape collection service provider. You should count the number of units returned to your store before they are collected by your vape collection service provider.

You do not need to distinguish between different types of vapes (i.e. brands), only the total number of units returned to your store and passed onto the vape collection service provider.

You need to keep all documentation you make, or are given by the waste collection provider, when you dispose of electrical and electronic waste. A template for recording the vapes returned to your store is [available here](#). Records must be kept for a four year period.

You also need to receive and fill in a waste consignment notice which should be provided by your waste collection provider that documents the returned vapes are being taken away to be recycled responsibly. Further information on this process and your responsibilities [is available here](#).

Non-Compliance

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) enforces the collection of vapes and other electrical products. You can be prosecuted and get an unlimited fine if you do not comply with the regulations. You may get warning letters before enforcement action, fine or prosecutions are undertaken.

You can contact them if you have any questions on compliance or suspected non-compliance via email or their telephone number below.