



WHAT IS A PORTABLE BATTERY?

LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

The European Batteries Directive (2006/66/EC) of 6 September 2006 requires member states including the UK to meet certain targets for the collection and recycling of all batteries. This legislation has now been put into UK law.

This legislation categorises batteries into three groups:-

- **Automotive Batteries**
- **Industrial Batteries**
- **Portable Batteries**

The legislation sets different collection rates for the different categories, so it is important that the distinctions between the categories is understood by all concerned, and are applied consistently by producers when putting the batteries on the market and the waste industry at the end of the batteries' life.

COLLECTION TARGETS

AUTOMOTIVE AND INDUSTRIAL BATTERIES

There are no specific collection targets for Automotive and Industrial batteries. However, both the incineration and landfilling of these batteries is prohibited, and therefore by inference, there is a collection target of 100%.

PORTABLE BATTERIES

For portable batteries the European Legislation sets 2 targets:-

25% of portable batteries to be collected by 2012, and;

45% of portable batteries to be collected by 2016

WHAT IS A PORTABLE BATTERY?

However, the UK has introduced a number of interim targets, to help achieve the necessary collected volume. These currently are:-

2010	10%	
2011	18%	
2012	25%	European Target 1
2013	30%	
2014	35%	
2015	40%	
2016	45%	European Target 2

THE DEFINITION OF DIFFERENT BATTERIES

The Government definitions of Automotive, Industrial and Portable Batteries are as follows:-

- **An automotive battery** is one which is used for the starting or ignition of the engine of a vehicle, or for providing power for any lighting used by such a vehicle.
- **A portable battery** or battery pack is one which is sealed, can be hand-carried without difficulty, and is neither an automotive nor industrial battery.
- **An industrial battery** or battery pack is one which is:
 - (i) designed exclusively for industrial or professional uses;
 - (ii) used as a source of power for propulsion in an electric vehicle;
 - (iii) unsealed, but is not an automotive battery; or
 - (iv) sealed, but is not a portable battery.

The automotive battery definition is fairly clear, however there is scope for confusion between Industrial and Portable batteries, particularly as there are a significant number of small, easily-carried batteries that will fall into the Industrial category.

G&P Batteries suggests that the following guidance may help decide which category a particular battery will fall into:

A Portable battery is one that is small, and can be hand-carried, and **is designed to be changed by the user of the equipment.**

If you have a battery for a piece of equipment which is clearly meant to be changed by an engineer, (e.g. if it is difficult to get at, has terminal wires attached, or labels suggesting that engineers only should open the equipment), then the chances are it is an Industrial Battery.

The above is only a guide, and may not apply in every single case. If you are in doubt about whether your battery is automotive, portable or industrial, then contact either the producer of the battery, your Battery Compliance Scheme or G&P Batteries.