

The RoHS Directive and BASE Product Compliance



Look for this label!

The European Unions' RoHS (Restriction of Hazardous Substances) Directive 2002/95/CE imposes significant restrictions on the use of lead, mercury, hexavalent chromium, cadmium, and flame retardant materials of the PBB (polybrominated biphenyl) and PBDE (polybrominated diphenyl ether) types. The EU Directive becomes effective as of July 1, 2006 for products manufactured in or entering the EU. Compliance to this directive is under consideration in other countries and US states and RoHS has already been legislated into law in California to be effective January 1, 2007.

While most of the focus of compliance in the Electronics Manufacturing business seems to be about Lead-Free issues related to soldering and components, full compliance with the RoHS Directive means the restriction of all the substances mentioned above.

BASE has analyzed our product line and processes and taken actions necessary to eliminate these restricted materials. These actions have included reviewing each product and component for banned substances, identifying reliable alternative compliant components, setting priorities and schedules for compliance, coordination with suppliers, changing/modifying manufacturing procedures and processes, and revising quality monitoring.

BASE Electronics is committed to the global environmental effort and spirit of the RoHS Directive. Our recent and on-going actions taken to achieve product compliance will always be revised and improved, continually becoming the ever-higher standard by which all our products are being produced.

RoHS FAQ

What is RoHS?

RoHS is European Union Directive 2002/95/EC on the Restriction of Hazardous Substances.

What substances are covered by RoHS?

RoHS restricts the use of lead (Pb), cadmium (Cd), mercury (Hg), hexavalent chromium (Cr6+), cadmium, and polybrominated biphenyls (PBBs) and polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs).

What is the difference between lead-free and RoHS compliant?

Lead-Free refers to processes, materials or components produced without the use of lead, which is only one of the substances restricted by the EU RoHS Directive. However, RoHS Compliant means the material, or component is produced with the presence of any of the restricted substances under their maximum concentration values.

What are the benefits of the RoHS Directive?

The extraction of these raw materials and their eventual disposal can cause damage to both the environment and human health from occupational exposure and exposure following disposal. The removal of these materials will reduce the health risks of human and environmental exposure.

When is compliance required?

If selling products in the EU market, products must be in compliance by July 1, 2006. The compliance date set for California is January 1, 2007. Compliance dates for other states and countries will not be set until these new acts are considered by individual governments and legislated into law.

Will all BASE products become RoHS compliant?

Eventually, Yes. BASE is changing all products over to meet the requirements of the RoHS Directive. Many are already compliant.

Are there any exemptions to RoHS?

Yes, and the list of exemptions is growing all the time.

Why should we worry about RoHS in the US?

While true that compliance with RoHS is not mandatory outside the EU, the directive is under review in many countries and states of the US. RoHS has been put into law effective 2/1/07 in California. Similar laws are in effect in Japan, Thailand, and soon in China. So, the feeling is that eventually, other states and countries will adopt these restrictions.

What if a customer needs to maintain or repair present equipment after July 1, 2006?

The use of restricted substances in spare parts to repair equipment put on the market before July, 2006 will be permitted, but will not be allowed in new equipment. While still to be determined and agreed by governments - technically, non-compliant products could be used for repair indefinitely.

What test methods are used to assess compliance with the RoHS Directive?

Standard test methods are under development. The EU has not determined and explained how they will test products for compliance, which is a violation of the WTO TBT Agreement. Manufacturers are currently on their own and on their honor to develop, implement and monitor their own RoHS compliance systems.