

ACTION ON NON-COMPLIANT PUMPS IS LONG OVERDUE

Gary Wilde, BPMA Technical Services Officer, argues for urgent action to be taken to stop the sale of imported non-compliant pumps.

Established pump manufacturers go to great lengths and costs to produce the most energy-efficient circulator pumps – meeting, and sometimes exceeding the current EU regulations.

The presence of illegal pump imports entering the UK from other countries is a significant concern, and it would appear that several online marketplaces and online pump sellers are allowing the sale of products that do not comply with the mandated EU Energy Efficient Index (EEI). The voluntary A-G scheme was replaced on the 1 January 2013 with the Energy Using Products directive, (Commission Regulation EU 622/2012) and this regulation specifies that an EEI must be achieved on each circulator. The figure in January 2013 was EEI 0.27, and this was reduced in 2015 to EEI 0.23.

The EEI rating system requires that the correct information is indicated on the pump name plate, packaging and technical documentation. Also, the circulator is defined as part of product CE marking.

Some pumps bear the Chinese export logo; This CE mark means ‘China Export’ and simply means that the pump was manufactured in China. For re-sellers of these products selling non-compliant pumps can result in imprisonment or a fine.

It is now over six years since this came to the attention of the BPMA, yet to our knowledge, only one enforcement action has taken place which breached regulation 14(1) of the Eco design for energy-related products regulation 2010. The pump in question had no declared EEI value and, when tested, the EEI was 0.82, which is far more than the current 0.23 limit. I am sure that if the vast number of domestic circulators from the selling sites that I have mentioned were tested, we would see the same outcome, and this is unacceptable.

The Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) is responsible for coordinating market surveillance activity (MSA) in the UK. It is part of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and was established in January 2018 to provide additional national capacity for product safety activity and it will continue to have this remit after the UK’s exit from the EU. If we do leave the EU, I do wonder whether the UK will become the next dumping ground for inferior products.

In my opinion, one enforcement in six years is not good enough, and more should be done to protect the public. The Health and Safety Executive has enforcing authority responsibility for product supply and safety matters, but its market surveillance activity is intelligence-based and reactive. The BPMA urges these departments to go online to see for themselves the vast problem of non-compliant and non-CE marked products being sold in the UK.

These products will also have a detrimental effect on the UK achieving its environmental goals as associated running costs over the lifetime of these non-compliant products could be ten times more expensive than a ‘legal’ compliant version.

We need to be collectively vigilant about illegally imported pump products to protect the safety of the consumer and the environment. The BPMA looks forward to the UK Government departments taking action as we believe the problem has been going on far too long, not just with the issue raised here, but also relating to the non-CE marking of pumping equipment built by set builders in the UK which has already been highlighted by the BPMA, with no action being taken so far for any company.

The BPMA’s door is always open to assist any Government department to eradicate the sub-standard products entering the market place by whichever selling channels. ➔



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