




Environmental sustainability is a responsibility that rests on everyone's shoulders. For the past several years, the continuing environmental impact of Information Technology (IT) hardware and network equipment has become an area of increased industry focus with the introduction of new directives that are global in their reach.

The "Restriction of the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances (RoHS) Directive" came into force in Europe on 1 July 2006. Similar regulations have been adopted in the State of California in the U.S. Other U.S. states either have already adopted or are expected to implement similar regulations at some point in the future, as are countries such as China. The scope of the RoHS Directive is to ensure that electrical and electronic equipment will not damage the environment when it is subsequently discarded. Virtually all organizations rely on IT equipment on a daily basis and it is essential that IT managers know and understand the issues surrounding the new RoHS Directive as well as the impact it can have on their specific business.

The RoHS Directive is intended to reduce the use of environmentally hazardous substances in equipment and also reduce the waste management issues associated with specific heavy metals such as lead, cadmium, hexavalent chromium and mercury as well as two polybrominated flame retardants, PBB and PBDE. From a cabling perspective, manufacturers are required to restrict the use of each of these ingredients to a maximum concentration in any cabling component. For these products to be promoted as being "free" of the hazardous substance, concentration levels for each substance must be below certain levels. The Directive within the European Union for these levels is 0.1% or 1,000 parts per million (ppm), except for cadmium, which is 0.01% or 100 ppm. The primary focus for cabling products has been to replace the lead-based stabilizers in PVC compounds that allow PVC to be processed without degradation. Extensive work has also been undertaken to remove hazardous materials from connecting hardware.



The principles of the RoHS Directive are very much in line with SYSTIMAX® Solutions' multi-year effort to implement its environmental commitment to ensure material compliance. On first assessment, the task may appear straightforward; however, first impressions can be deceptive. SYSTIMAX Solutions™ faced two main challenges. The first was to design solutions that perform to the same high standard that its customers have come to expect and the second was to ensure that new products met the hazardous material concentration levels so they could be classified as compliant. Creating high-performance products that are also environmentally friendly is an ongoing priority for SYSTIMAX® Labs engineers.

For many years, SYSTIMAX Solutions has been voluntarily adhering to strict environmental codes of practise. In 2000, SYSTIMAX Solutions also became ISO14001 certified, an internationally accepted specification for environmental management. Among other requirements, ISO14001 specifies the requirements for establishing an environmental policy as well as determining environmental aspects and impacts of products, activities and services. Overall this has reduced the amount of waste that SYSTIMAX Solutions produces by increasing the efficiency and use of energy and raw materials.

For more details on SYSTIMAX Solutions products, please contact your local account manager.

