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Productwise Battery Shorts, Part 3: Substance Restrictions

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In Part 3 of our 'Battery Shorts' series, we look at the substance restrictions under the new European Union (EU) Batteries Regulation, which have applied since 18 August 2024.

If you are wondering whether the Batteries Regulation applies to your products, please see Part 1 of our series. For information on conformity assessment and CE marking, please see Part 2 of our series.

Substance restrictions

The Batteries Regulation incorporates restrictions on mercury and cadmium which are included in the EU's existing Batteries Directive. It also introduces a new restriction on lead.

The restrictions are as follows:

- All batteries must not contain more than 0.0005% of **mercury** by weight.
- Portable batteries must not contain more than 0.002% of **cadmium** by weight.
- Portable batteries must not contain more than 0.01% of **lead** by weight.

These requirements have applied since 18 August 2024, save for the lead restriction on portable zinc-air button cells, which does not apply until 18 August 2028.

Manufacturers of portable batteries and products containing batteries must ensure their batteries comply with these restrictions.

The European Commission has powers to add further substance restrictions in the future.

Labelling of restricted substances

The Batteries Regulation introduces several new labelling requirements, which will be summarised in a later instalment of our series. At this stage, we flag that all batteries containing more than 0.002% of cadmium or 0.004% of lead must be labelled with the chemical symbol for the relevant metal.

Where it is not possible to mark this information on the battery itself, it can be provided on packaging or accompanying documentation.

Stay tuned for Part 4 of our 'Battery Shorts' series, which will summarise the new supply chain diligence requirements applicable from 18 August 2025.

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