

Vaping legislation needs to do more to tackle recycling issues, says industry expert

Submitted by: Kin Communications2

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- Recycling rates have fallen so low that over 14 million homes in England recycle less than they did in 2011.
- Each e-cigarette smoker uses, on average, 10 small plastic e-liquid bottles each week that are going to landfills.
- An estimated 3.2 million people currently use e-cigarettes.

While the vaping industry has increased significantly over the last few years from 1.5 million users to an estimated 3.2 million, legislation brought in last year has now been found to discourage recycling efforts that are destroying our environment says industry expert Jacki Edwards, of V2 Cigs UK (<https://www.buyv2cigs.co.uk>)

The legislation in question is the Tobacco Products Directive set out in 2014, with the latest 2018 revision in shaping the tobacco and vaping industry with new restrictive regulations. The revisions focus on reducing nicotine levels which means that e-liquids containing nicotine can only be purchased in 10ml containers at a max-strength of 20mg with heavily restricted vape tank regulations that previously allowed 50ml bottles.

“On average e-cigarette users individually consume 70 – 100ml of e-liquids a week, meaning approximately 10 small plastic bottles per user are going to landfills,” says Edwards. “The plastic cannot be recycled without appropriate washing and treatment, leaving no option for consumers but to put it in the bin.

“Previously, e-liquid was stored in glass bottles as they’re at least recyclable. Why is there legislation against glass bottles when plastic is absorbent and toxic? Customers were never consulted when this legislation was introduced in Brussels and they did it without actually having a look at what they were doing to the environment by changing it.

“The vaping industry needs to make a conservative effort to get the government to change the legislation to allow for bigger capacity bottles again.”

Meanwhile, councils, when prompted to advise e-cigarette users on the next steps they can take to recycle their e-liquid bottles, are unaware of what they can do or how to properly dispose of e-cigarettes and bottles. Additionally, recycling rates have fallen so far that over 14 million homes in England currently recycle less than they did in 2011, with academics warning it is unlikely the government will achieve its target of recycling 50% of household waste by 2020.

While Jacki is completely aware of the danger e-cigarettes can impose on the environment, such as the negligence in disposing e-liquid plastic bottles or the use of lithium batteries, Jacki notes that with proper education and direction we can make moves to become more sustainable.

“We have the same problem when we go to supermarkets. Take a look at how much packaging is in the groceries and it shouldn't be up to the consumer to try and deal with what the manufacturers are doing. The manufacturers need to actually deal with the fact that we are over-packaged and that the regulations on the packaging are not environmentally friendly.

“We need regulation coming from government downwards that looks at the environmentally impact. Once they actually change the packaging legislation that would take care of the problem.”

- ENDS -

NOTES TO EDITOR

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ABOUT V2 Cigs UK

V2 Cigs UK was founded in January 2012 by three passionate people. A smoker, an-ex smoker and a non-smoker. It is one of the few electronic cigarette companies operating in the UK where the product manufacturer runs and owns its own manufacturing process. This ensures end-to-end control of the supply chain and product integrity.

SOURCES

The latest data reported in the Office of National Statistics were produced in partnership with Public Health England on 2 July 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/e-cigarettes-regulations-for-consumer-products>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-43197454>