

Kitchenware specialist pays £12,000 over missed recycling fees

Windsor based Groupe SEB UK Ltd, a large global importer and holder of well known cookware and small kitchen appliances, has paid £12,000 to two water charities for failing to meet its recycling responsibilities.

The money was split equally between charities, Thames Rivers Trust and The Marine Conservation Society, to help pay for projects including litter picking and removal at London Rivers Week and The Great British Beach Clean. Both projects are aimed at dealing with the impact of packaging waste on the environment and local communities.

Any company producing more than 50 tonnes of packaging a year with a turnover of above £2 million must register with the Environment Agency or a packaging compliance scheme, and meet their responsibilities for recycling waste packaging.

Groupe SEB of Riverside House, Windsor, failed to recover and recycle the weight of packaging it added to the UK waste stream in 2017, and a total of 1,183 tonnes of packaging waste may not have been diverted from landfill, which impedes the UK's ability to meet its recycling targets.

The original proactive enforcement undertaking offer was made in 2018 to the Environment Agency and was for Groupe SEB's failure to register as a producer and recover or recycle packaging waste in 2017. The company had previously been compliant but mistakenly believed it was registered when it moved from one compliance scheme to another.

For its enforcement undertaking, the company offered £12,000, more than double the calculated amount of avoided costs (£5,950.17).

Follow up work by the Environment Agency confirmed these charities received and have used their donations in their projects.

Manna Wan, a Regulatory Officer with the Environment Agency in Berkshire, said:

Enforcement undertakings are a type of civil sanction that allow us to secure regulatory compliance from organisations. They also ensure businesses don't profit from non compliance and provide an opportunity for them to react responsibly to any offending.

While agreeing to enforcement undertakings, the Environment Agency continues to prosecute organisations and individuals where evidence shows high levels of culpability and serious environmental harm.