



First companies dual certified to both R2 and e-Stewards

By Henry Leineweber

Electronics Recyclers International of Fresno, California and Jack's Family Recycling Center of Alexandria, Minnesota have become the first firms to successfully complete both the R2 and e-Stewards certifications.

"Both are built on ISO 14001:2004 and are actually pretty similar," says Kathy Hodges, JFRC president. "e-Stewards required some extra documentation on things like data security, downstream audits and transporters."

"e-Stewards certainly gets a little more particular," says ERI CEO John Shegerian. "But these are both great standards and they accomplish the goal of bringing more accountability to the industry, which we really need."

ERI went through both certification processes simultaneously, using several different auditors for its different facilities, including QMI-SAI Global for its Fresno operation.

"Our chief compliance officer literally had to map our every day's activity at each facility for the better part of a year," continues Shegerian. "I have to give credit to our compliance and EH&S team. This was a massive undertaking, but it was absolutely worth it."

Hodges says her company also went through both certifications simultaneously using Orion Registrar and recommends other companies looking to pursue both standards coordinate between the two as much as possible. Audits and paperwork were handled at the same time over the one-year process, saving the company time and money and also helping ensure that the company can schedule any future R2 and e-Stewards audits for the same time frame.

As to why the company chose to pursue both certifications, Hodges had this to say: "People in the recycling industry understand what the differences are, but we were having a really hard time explaining R2 and e-Stewards to people in government, collection organizers, and others," says Hodges. "Now when they ask us about one or the other, we can just say we're certified in both."

"These are the two biggest standards out there. Some of our clients prefer one to the other, some prefer both. We're in the business of serving our clients," explains Shegerian.

The unintentionally corresponding announcements by ERI and JFRC illustrate what many believe will be the trend in certification going forward, as companies seek to save time and

money and ward off confusion by pursuing dual standards. The announcements are also notable in that they were made by both a large, nationally-recognized firm and a smaller regional processor, dispelling some of the conventional thinking that obtaining one, or both certifications, is financially out of reach for smaller firms.

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