

In addition to the information already provided, more specifically in response to questions 2 and 3, it is important to know that since two years the Belgian Sign Organization BSO has created a label called 'EQN' (Eco Quality Neon) for HLDT glasshops, based on acceptance of a charter. These glasshops commit:

- 1) to strive continuously to reduce this quantity according to the latest developments in research and technology of EQN. Yearly the EQN Committee will evaluate this and announce the maximum quantity for the coming year based on proven progress and reliability. (For 2011 and 2012 the maximum quantity is 100 mg per HLDT).
- 2) not to exceed that maximum quantity of mercury per HLDT and to use only calibrated equipment or tools for this purpose.
- 3) to strive continuously to enhance the quality of their HLDT's and to give at least 18 months of warranty if these products have been correctly used and installed.
- 4) to recycle old or broken tubes that contain mercury through the services of a contracted and officially licensed waste management company.
- 5) to have the health condition checked regularly of all staff members working in the glasshop.
- 6) to participate in a programme of verification of the above points and analysis of its tube processing equipment and products by inspectors assigned by EQN.

EQN has been enthusiastically adopted by the majority of glasshops in Belgium, others have applied for certification. The EQN system is expanding into other European countries. With the European Sign Federation we are looking into organizing EQN at European level as this serves three purposes:

- to minimize the total use of mercury for HLDT's down to the lowest practicable level
- to maximize the life expectancy of HLDT's, thereby saving energy and reducing the cost of ownership
- to show responsibility with respect to the community that we are all part of

Luc Steegmans,
President ESF