

Plug-In To eCycling



It's Smart!

Tossing once expensive things like your old computer into the trash doesn't feel smart. But reusing or recycling your computer or TV is smart. By reusing or recycling your unwanted electronics, you can provide your old friends with a second chance and help ensure that these materials are managed safely.

It's Good for the Environment!

Donating or recycling your outdated electronics encourages the safe management of their potentially hazardous components and supports the recovery and reuse of valuable materials. It also helps reduce the pollution and energy use tied to the production of new electronics. Finally, it can put a computer, TV, or cell phone in the hands of someone who really needs it.

And You Can Do It!

Many communities and businesses offer programs to collect and reuse or recycle electronics, making it easier and easier to do the smart thing. Some cities run continuous collections for electronics or pick these goods up on an advertised day. Other communities have a collection site that you can take your electronics to. In addition, a number of computer and TV manufacturers invite you to send back old electronics. Finally, in select areas, a retailer or a non-profit may accept your electronics for recycling or reuse. Log onto www.pluginstorecycling.org for a list of programs in your area.

For more information go to
www.pluginstorecycling.org
or e-mail us at oswchallenge@epa.gov

Thanks to our Campaign Leadership Partners*

EPA thanks our Leadership Partners for their generous support of the Plug-In To eCycling Campaign. To learn more about becoming a Plug-In To eCycling Partner, log on to www.pluginstorecycling.org.



EARTH 911

*Please refer to www.pluginstorecycling.org for a complete listing of all current partners.



When purchasing electronics, be sure to look for the ENERGY STAR logo. The ENERGY STAR identifies electronics that protect the environment through superior energy efficiency. Only products that meet strict energy efficiency guidelines set by EPA earn the ENERGY STAR. For a complete list of product models, visit www.energystar.gov.

EPA's Resource Conservation Challenge: What Can You Save Today? The Plug-In To eCycling Campaign is one of many new efforts under EPA's Resource Conservation Challenge, which seeks to increase recycling nationwide and cut the generation of 30 harmful chemicals by 2005.

EPA thanks the Institute for Local Self Reliance and Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance for sharing the campaign name "Plug-In To Recycling."

Plug-in To e-Cycling

WITH U.S. EPA



Why Recycle Electronics?

In the past decade, our growing reliance on electronics has given rise to a new environmental challenge: safe and resource-wise management of electronic waste. Electronics are a fast growing portion of America's trash—with 250 million computers destined to become obsolete by 2005. And electronics are made with valuable materials. In 1998, over 112 million pounds of materials were recovered from electronics including steel, glass, plastic, and precious metals. Plus, electronics can present an environmental hazard if they are disposed of improperly. With an average of four pounds of lead in many older TV picture tubes or computer monitors, along with other potentially hazardous materials, electronics call for special handling at the end of their lives.

You Can Help!

Bring unwanted electronic products to collection sites for reuse or environmentally sound recycling.

- Computers
- Televisions
- Cell Phones
- VCRs
- And more!

Learn more at: www.pluginrecycling.org



Give Used Electronics a Second Chance! Reuse or Recycle Them!

Americans are plugging-in to eCycling all over the country!

Our electronics retail, manufacturing, and recycler partners offer recycling/reuse opportunities to consumers through programs across the country. For information on programs in your area, go to www.pluginrecycling.org.

Communities care! With more than 175 electronic recycling programs already in place, plugging-in to recycling is easier than ever! The Mid-Atlantic region of the United States alone has diverted more than 2,700 tons of electronic waste from the municipal waste stream!

You can also help others by donating your old electronics. Numerous non-profits will gladly accept your computers, computer components, and cell phones. They may refurbish or upgrade them and then donate them, enabling libraries in disadvantaged communities to have internet access or victims of domestic violence to have phones. They may also sell your refurbished equipment and use the profits to do good like purchasing and protecting acres of rainforest. Donating your electronics for recycling and reuse keeps them out of landfills too. One Northwest organization alone diverted over 1,000 tons of electronic waste from landfills in the past year.

Why Is Electronics Waste a Problem?

- More than 3.2 million tons of electronic waste is laid to rest in landfills each year.
- Nearly 250 million computers will become obsolete in the next 5 years.
- Many people discard computers every 3 to 5 years.
- In 2001, only 11 percent of personal computers retired in the US were recycled.
- Mobile phones will be discarded at a rate of 130 million per year by 2005, resulting in 65,000 tons of waste.
- TVs and computers can contain an average of 4 pounds of lead (depending on their size, make, and vintage) as well as other potential toxics like chromium, cadmium, mercury, beryllium, nickel, zinc, and brominated flame retardants. These materials need to be handled carefully.
- Cell phones also need special handling because they contain lead and brominated flame retardants.

