

# Your Role in Electronics Recycling

## *A guide for recycling responsible units and other local governments*

Wisconsin's 2009 electronics recycling law bans most electronics from landfills and incinerators. The law also requires manufacturers of certain electronic devices to help pay for the responsible recycling of used electronics from households and K-12 public schools in Wisconsin. Recyclers and collectors can choose to participate in the manufacturer-funded program called E-Cycle Wisconsin. Registered E-Cycle Wisconsin collection sites (temporary, permanent or both) can be found in most counties in Wisconsin.

Local governments that are responsible units (RUs) for residential recycling have specific requirements under the electronics recycling law. Other local units of government can choose to participate in the program as recyclers or collectors. Collecting electronics is completely voluntary for all local governments.

### RU outreach requirements

The law requires RUs to educate their residents about the electronics disposal ban, the importance of recycling and local recycling opportunities.

The law does not require RUs to use specific methods to educate residents about electronics recycling (also called e-cycling). We encourage RUs, at a minimum, to include e-cycling information in their existing outreach efforts (for example, in tax bill fliers, community letters and/or signs posted at recycling drop-off sites). Many RUs, especially those that collect electronics, may want to do additional outreach.

Free E-Cycle Wisconsin outreach materials, including brochures, fliers, posters, newsletter templates, and advertisements (video and audio) are available on the DNR website. You can order printed copies of fliers, posters and brochures for free. The DNR can also provide limited quantities of promotional materials, such as pencils, stickers and temporary tattoos, for community outreach events.

Visit [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov), search "ecycle" and click the outreach resources link to find these materials.

No matter which methods your RU chooses, your e-cycling outreach needs to include information on the following three components:

- ✓ the disposal ban
- ✓ why it is important to recycle electronics
- ✓ how residents, schools and businesses can recycle their electronics

The next page has background on these topics that you can use.



## Disposal ban background information

The following items are banned from landfills and incinerators in Wisconsin and should be recycled:

- × Televisions
- × Computers (desktop, laptop, netbook and tablet computers)
- × Desktop printers (including those that scan, fax and/or copy)
- × Computer monitors
- × Other computer accessories (including mice, keyboards and speakers)
- × DVD players, VCRs and DVRs
- × Fax machines
- × Cell phones

Many electronics recyclers will also accept other types of electronics like stereo equipment, mp3 players, digital cameras and other hand-held devices. Check with the electronics recyclers or collection sites near you for a full list of what they accept.

## Background information on why it is important to e-cycle

E-waste is one of the fastest growing parts of municipal solid waste worldwide. People have more electronic devices than they did in the past and they are replacing them at an ever-faster rate. Electronics contain valuable reusable materials, including plastics, metals and glass. Recycling or reusing these materials lessens environmental impacts and economic costs by reducing the need for virgin materials in new products.

Electronics also contain harmful materials, including lead, mercury, cadmium, chromium, other heavy metals and chemical flame retardants. When improperly disposed of, these chemicals can pollute our soil and water and impact human health.

Improperly handled e-waste also poses health risks to workers in the United States and in developing countries. Many old electronics are recycled into new electronics. To see what happens when electronics are recycled, watch the video "What Happens When I E-Cycle" at [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov), search "ecycle."

## Background information on how to recycle electronics

If your community collects electronics, you can provide "how to e-cycle" information simply by advertising the location, hours, and any other details, such as fees or restrictions on size or type of electronics accepted at your site. Alternatively, you may direct residents to the DNR's list of registered E-Cycle Wisconsin collection sites, by visiting [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and searching "ecycle."



*A worker safely dismantles old electronics at a Wisconsin e-cycling facility.*

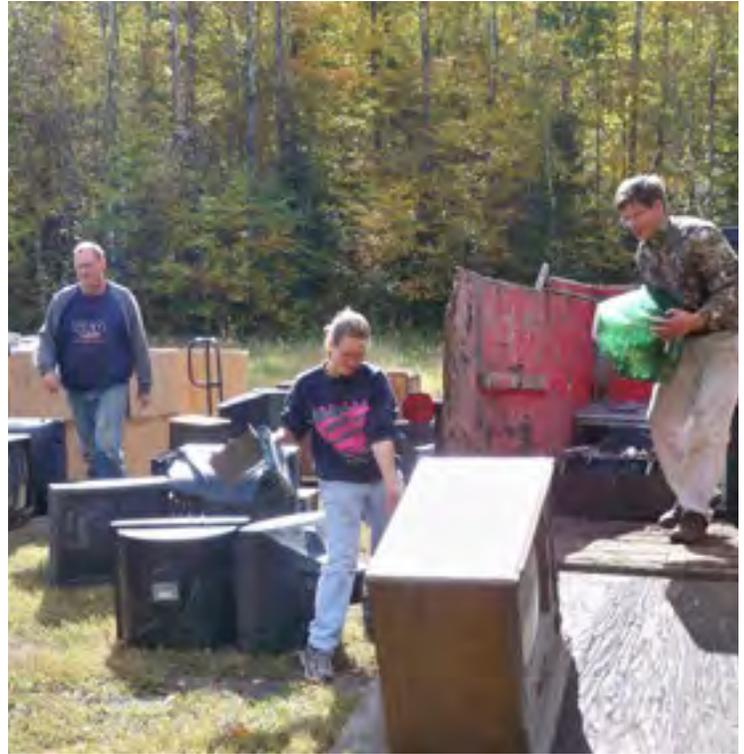
## Local government collection options

Local governments are not required to collect electronics for recycling. If you already collect electronics, you may continue to do so, either as a registered E-Cycle Wisconsin collector or outside of the program.

If there are few electronics collection sites in your area or if you have frequent problems with illegal dumping of electronics, you may want to consider hosting a temporary collection event (perhaps as part of a Clean Sweep event) or establishing a permanent electronics collection site. Some communities have teamed up to offer electronics collection events or have worked together to put out a joint request for bids from electronics recyclers.

There are many factors to consider when deciding whether to collect electronics. Before making any decisions, you may want to review the DNR's "E-Cycle Wisconsin Collector Frequently Asked Questions" publication. You can also call the DNR E-Cycle Wisconsin program to ask questions about becoming a collection site.

*A Rusk County collection event in 2010.*



## For more information

Call or email DNR E-Cycle Wisconsin staff at (608) 266-2111 or [DNRWAE-cycling@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRWAE-cycling@wisconsin.gov).

Visit [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and search "ecycle" for more information for local governments and electronics collectors, links to publications mentioned above, and other free resources.



**PUB WA-1746 2015**  
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