



For release September 12, 2008

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ELECTRONICS MANUFACTURERS BUILD FREE STATEWIDE RECYCLING NETWORK

Beginning January 1, recycling of computers and TVs will be free to public and other groups

Effective January 1, 2009, electronics manufacturers will begin to pay for recycling computers, monitors, laptops and TVs through the new *E-Cycle Washington* program. The Washington Materials Management & Financing Authority (WMMFA) is the manufacturer agency charged with establishing and overseeing the statewide program and collector network.

Electronics manufacturers, collectors, recyclers, retailers, local and state government and non-profit groups are working together on *E-Cycle Washington* and plans are well underway to carry out the provisions of the Electronic Product Recycling Act that passed in July 2006. The law allows households, schools, small businesses, small governments and special purpose districts, and non-profits to drop off covered electronics for recycling.

"This program is unique in that it is entirely manufacturer-funded, and shows that Washington is a leader in providing responsible recycling of unwanted electronics products," says John Friedrich, Executive Director of the WMMFA. "We expect to collect and process over 20 million pounds of electronic waste in the first year of operations. Our collector network will include over 200 individual collection sites, in every county in the state and in every city or town with a population greater than 10,000—making electronics recycling easier and more convenient than ever."

Friedrick expects some confusion at first as not all electronic products will be accepted, and some sites may charge a fee for products NOT covered by the program – including mice, printers, cell phones, scanners, and other electrical devices and appliances. At the start of operations in January, covered products accepted free of charge will include televisions, computers, laptops, and monitors.

"We want to reassure people that while there surely be some hiccups as we implement a program of this size and scope, we are committed to building a comprehensive system that works for everyone and that will benefit Washington's environment," Friedrich continued. "We'd also like to emphasize that this is a permanent program, so there is no need to 'rush' to collection sites right away. Sites will be open and available to accept products throughout 2009 and beyond."

Why Free?

Millions of pounds of unwanted electronic products end up in Washington State landfills each year. These products can contain toxic materials that can harm human health and the environment. By

providing a comprehensive and convenient network of collection sites available to the public, for free, electronics manufacturers will contribute towards a cleaner and safer environment while reducing the volume of waste by recycling metals, glass, plastics and other materials contained in these products.

Products collected under the program will be taken to an approved processor that has agreed to follow the state's comprehensive processing standards, intended to ensure that no materials either hazardous to the environment or to human health are allowed to enter landfills in this country or abroad. All materials will be accounted for and all processors will be subject to audit and reporting requirements to the approval of the WMMFA and the Department of Ecology.

Finding a Drop-off Location after January 1

- Members of the public should be able to find familiar drop off locations near their neighborhood as the WMMFA is making arrangements with non-profit thrift organizations with established collection sites around the State.
- School districts, small businesses and small governments with larger quantities (over 10 units) are asked to call the Authority toll-free at 1-866-779-6632 for instructions on the handling of large quantities.

Products entering the program that are in working order will be diverted to reuse whenever possible to conserve resources and provide an opportunity for others to get the remaining life from the products.

For more information

For up to date information about *E-Cycle Washington*, residents can go to www.ecyclewashington.org.

While the statewide program does not begin until January 2009, there are networks and resources available now around the state that accept unwanted electronics for a fee. Visit www.takeitbacknetwork.org or <http://1800RECYCLE.wa.gov> or call 1-800-RECYCLE to find a location near you.

For information about WMMFA, the organization designated to operate and implement the statewide electronics recycling program, visit www.wmmfa.net or call 1-866-779-6632 toll free.