

Electronics Recycling Program

2007 Legislation Creates Product Stewardship Approach for E-Waste

Background

Oregon legislation enacted in 2007 (House Bill 2626) creates and finances a statewide collection, transportation and recycling system for the convenient, safe and environmentally sound recycling of covered electronic devices (CEDs). CEDs include televisions, desktop and portable computers, and computer monitors. The collection and recycling system is financed by manufacturers.



Volunteers at Free Geek in Portland work on dismantling computers for recycling.

How the program works

Households, businesses and not-for-profit organizations that employ 10 or fewer people, and anyone (including corporations) giving seven or fewer CEDs to a collector at any one time may use the new system free of charge. (Note: CEDs do NOT include cell phones, fax machines or printers, for example.) The system must provide convenient electronics recycling in every county, including at least one collection site in every city with a population of 10,000 or more.

Under the new system, manufacturers of CEDs sold or offered for sale in Oregon must register with DEQ and pay an annual registration fee to fund DEQ's administrative costs for the program. Manufacturers then choose to manage their own statewide collection programs or participate in a state contractor program that DEQ will establish. Manufacturers cover their own manufacturer-run program costs or pay a recycling fee to participate in the state contractor program. All program options must be in operation by January 2009, and the new law prohibits disposal of CEDs in Oregon as of January 1, 2010.

To ensure convenient collection service statewide, the program will encourage the use of existing

collection programs and add collection sites where needed, such as in some rural counties.

Product stewardship

The system's product stewardship approach will relieve the burden of handling waste electronics products for local governments, who are responsible for solid waste management services in Oregon. The new system shares responsibilities.

Manufacturer responsibilities:

- Recycle their share of returned product
- Pay for cost of system
- Assure convenient, "free" collection statewide
- Educate and provide outreach

Retailer responsibilities:

- Ensure they sell only CEDs from registered and compliant manufacturers
- Educate and provide outreach to consumers

State government responsibilities:

- Register manufacturers
- Establish Environmental Management Practices (EMPs) and other guidelines
- Educate and provide outreach
- Enforce and provide oversight

Local government responsibilities:

- Educate and provide outreach to consumers

Consumer responsibility:

- Turn in electronics for recycling

Environmental protection

DEQ will establish EMPs, and recyclers participating in the system must meet the EMPs. A sorting system or triage at collection points will encourage reuse or refurbishment of electronics where appropriate.

What is Product Stewardship?

Product stewardship is an effort to encourage manufacturers and retailers to take increasing responsibility to reduce the lifecycle impacts of a product and its packaging (energy and materials consumption, air and water emissions, the amount of toxics in the product, worker safety, and waste disposal) in product design and in the end-of-life management of the products they produce.



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How the funding works

The system will be free to consumers.

Manufacturers have two ways to participate:

1. Computer manufacturers participating in the state contractor program pay a per-pound fee based on their share of the electronic wastes collected in a year plus their share of orphan products recycled. Television manufacturers in the state contractor program pay a per-pound fee based on return share, with the recycling fee prorated based on market share.
2. Manufacturer programs cover their own costs.

Manufacturer programs and the state contractor program will report to DEQ annual amounts recycled and brand/manufacture sampling data. The next-year return share obligations will be based on the previous year's recycling amounts, shares of the waste stream, and share of orphan products. Manufacturers pay a penalty if they do not meet their return share obligations.

Timeline

Key deadlines:

December 2007

- Manufacturers must register

July 2008

- Manufacturers choose to implement their own plan or participate in the state contractor program
- DEQ awards contract for contractor program

January 2009

- State contractor and manufacturer programs are operating

January 2010

- Disposal of CEDs is banned

Next steps for DEQ

To meet these timelines, in the next few months DEQ will:

- Recruit and hire a project lead plus two other staff
- Set up a system for manufacturer registration
- Convene an implementation working group
- Develop implementation guidelines
- Develop EMP guidelines
- Develop guidelines for manufacturers' plans
- Prepare a request for proposals for a state contractor program

For more information

For more information about the electronics recycling program, call Jan Whitworth at (503) 229-5913 or 1-800-452-4011. Information about

electronics recycling is also available at

<http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/electronics.htm>.

Alternative formats

Alternative formats (Braille, large type) of this document are available upon request. Contact DEQ's Office of Communications & Outreach, Portland, at (503) 229-5696, or call toll-free in Oregon at 1-800-452-4011, extension 5696.