

Green Computing: Recycling eWaste

We spend a lot of our time talking about waste - how to reduce, reuse and recycle it, and how to dispose of the left over bits. This is not a discussion you can simply label green or sustainable - it is a discussion about the survival of things we hold dear: planet, people, and freedom.

Electronic waste (eWaste) is one of the most controllable pieces of the waste stream. Recycling eWaste is easy; recycling eWaste morally and ethically takes a bit more work.

What is electronic waste? Any cell phone, computer, monitor, printer, CD, battery, television or other business or consumer electronics device, including cables. When disposed of improperly, these materials contain elements that work their way into our water table. The elements are also rendered non-reusable as they are blended in with other waste and lost.

What can be recycled? Darned near everything! A few key examples:

- Computer monitors (CRTs) contain an average of 4 lbs. of lead, a lot of reusable glass, chromium and mercury. All of these elements can be extracted and reused. For example, our recycler takes the glass from old monitors, and sends them to Samsung for use on flat screen monitors and TVs.
- CDs/DVRs contain gold, glass, plastic, nickel and other elements that are completely recoverable and reusable.



- Batteries - everything from the batteries that power your phone, laptop, and mouse can be recycled, whether single-use or rechargeable.
- Computers, printers, TVs, microwave ovens, power strips, lamps, and all other electronic items.

ASL (<http://www.aslrecycling.com>) is a good choice for an ethical eWaste recycler. ASL recycles onshore, sending only a few items overseas after they have been recycled down into constituent components. U.S. onshore recyclers are bound by the laws of the United States and are mandated to follow environmental laws in recycling. Not all recyclers recycle on shore, however, and the “downstream” of eWaste is one of the biggest issues for the environment today.

If you can't reuse old electronics, recycle them with a moral and ethical onshore recycler. Ask the questions about downstream, ask for written proof, and make sure that your recycler is bound by the laws of the United States, or if in Europe, by the laws of the European Union. All Covered is on the forefront of Green Computing and quickly establishing itself as a thought leader in the space. Contact All Covered if you have any further questions on how you can make your company's IT practices more “green” friendly.