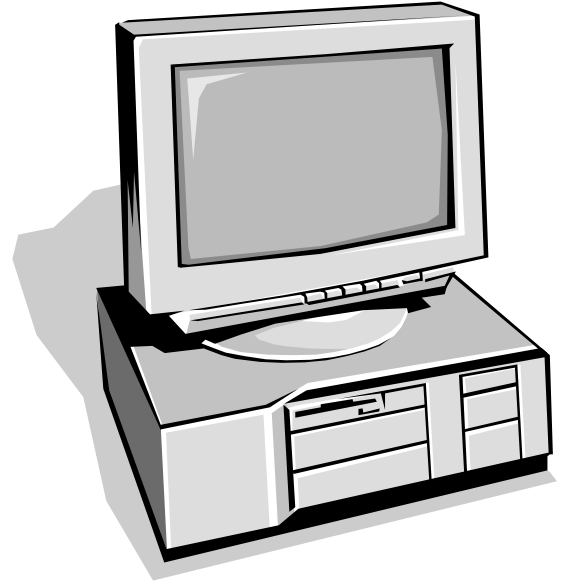


Electronic and Computer Waste

The problem with electronic and computer waste
Computers and electronic devices have greatly improved our quality of life. However, they have also created a new type of waste. Nationwide, computer and electronic waste comprises about 1% of the 230 million tons of garbage generated each year, and electronic waste is growing at three times the rate of other household waste. This waste is also more toxic than normal household garbage. Computers and other electronic devices contain toxic heavy metals, including arsenic, antimony, beryllium, cadmium, chromium, copper, lead, mercury, nickel and zinc. It is estimated that 40% of all heavy metals in household garbage comes from electronic equipment. Although the metals, glass, and plastic in electronics are recyclable, more than 70 percent—or 3.2 million tons—of the electronic waste stream ends up in landfills.



Common electronic and computer wastes

- Batteries, especially rechargeable batteries from cordless power tools, cellular and cordless phones, laptop computers, camcorders, digital cameras, and remote control toys. Rechargeable batteries include Nickel Cadmium (Ni-Cd), Nickel Metal Hydride (Ni-MH), Lithium Ion (Li-ion) and Small Sealed Lead (Pb).
- Cell phones (Up to 130 million phones—or 65,000 tons—are discarded every year)
- Computers, monitors, and computer equipment
- Stereos, TV's, VCR's, etc.

Electronic and computer waste prevention tips

A lot of people dispose of electronics before they reach the end of their useful life. You can help reduce this waste by giving away the products that you don't want to someone who does. Taking the time to donate your working electronics to organizations such as The Arc, Goodwill, or the Salvation Army not only prevents waste but also helps these organizations accomplish their goals. Many churches, community groups, and schools also accept donations of functional computers and computer equipment.

Many electronic products require and many consumers prefer to use rechargeable batteries. Rechargeable batteries prevent waste and can be easily and conveniently recycled (see below). If you are using disposable batteries, however, make sure you buy those made without toxic heavy metals. The packaging and the batteries themselves will have labels indicating that they do not contain mercury or other heavy metals; many of these environmentally friendly batteries have a green stripe around them. Disposable alkaline batteries that do not contain heavy metals can be safely disposed of in your household garbage.



Eleven offices along the front range serving the residents of Adams, Arapahoe and Douglas Counties
Administration Office: 7000 East Belleview Avenue, Suite 301 • Greenwood Village, Colorado 80111
Telephone: 303-220-9200 • Fax: 303-220-9208
Website: www.tchd.org

Electronic and computer waste recycling and disposal

Rechargeable batteries are collected for recycling at major retailers selling electronic products, such as Batteries Plus, Best Buy, Car Toys, Radio Shack, Staples, and Wal-Mart. For more information about recycling rechargeable batteries, including a list of locations that collect batteries near your home, contact the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation at www.rbrc.org or 800-8BATTERY (800-822-8837).

Cellular phones are also easily re-used or recycled. Most major cell phone and service retailers have programs to reuse or recycle cell phones, and will accept cell phones at retail outlet locations. Participating stores in the Denver Metro area include FranklinCovey and Qstar Wireless. For more information, contact the Wireless Foundation at www.wirelessfoundation.org or (202) 785-0081.

Computers and computer equipment can also be recycled at a variety of locations. Many computer manufacturers have recycling programs; look for more information about these programs on the manufacturers' websites. There are many locations in the Denver Metro area that re-sell, re-use or recycle used computers and peripheral components. Many non-profits will accept equipment. Always call to verify what types of equipment they will accept.

Electronic devices such as stereos, TV's, VCR's, and other consumer electronic products can be recycled at many recycling businesses, including the recycling centers listed below.

Some Electronic and computer waste recycling companies in Denver*

Name	City	Phone	Type**
Action Recycling Center	Wheat Ridge	303-424-1600	III
Alpha Institute – www.alpahi.org	Aurora	303-343-4114	I
Atlas Metal & Iron	Denver	303-825-7166	III
Gives, Inc. – www.givesinc.org	Aurora	303-682-3171	I
Guaranteed Recycling Experts – www.grxrecycles.com	Denver	303-477-2764	II
G&S Mountain Recyclers – www.mountainrecyclers.com	Longmont	303-682-3171	III
Luminous Recycling – www.luminousrecycling.com	Denver	303-660-2000	III
Provider's Resource Clearinghouse – prccolorado.org	Aurora	303-962-2270	I
RDR Electronics	Englewood	303-790-1830	II
Rocky Mountain Recycling – www.mountainrecycling.com	Commerce City	303-288-6867	III
Tech Recycling – www.techrecycle.com	Denver	303-766-9608	III
Waste Management/Recycle America – www.recycleamerica.com	Denver	303-296-4144	III
Westminster Rotary Club (Garth Godwin)	Westminster	303-428-8088	I

* This list is not exhaustive or complete; please check the yellow pages or Internet resources below for the most current information. TCHD does not recommend or endorse any specific companies.

** Type: I = Non-profit; II = Broker/Re-sale; III = Recycling Center

For more information, contact:

- Tri-County Health Department at www.tchd.org or call the Household Chemical Info line at (303) 846-6249
- Colorado Recycles Recycling Guide® at www.colorado-recycles.org
- Earth's 911: The Environmental Hotline at 1-800-CLEANUP or www.cleanup.org
- Electronic Industries Alliance: www.eiae.org
- Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation at www.rbrc.org or 800-8BATTERY (800-822-8837)
- The Wireless Foundation at www.wirelessfoundation.org or (202) 785-0081