WHAT IS CONSUMER ELECTRONIC WASTE?

Consumer electronics are defined as “devices operated by electricity that contain circuit boards, liquid crystal display, or plasma display”. Think of this as anything with a cord or a battery. Under no circumstances should any electronic waste be discarded into the general trash.

HOW ARE SURPLUS CONSUMER ELECTRONICS MANAGED?

Property Disposition is responsible for the accountable disposal of University of Michigan property designated as surplus by university departments. They may recycle, sell, or dispose of surplus. Occasionally, Property Disposition will direct the department with the surplus electronics to arrange for disposal through OSEH. Such electronics are then considered e-waste.

Containers of e-waste must have a green “Universal Waste” label affixed and filled out. All e-waste must be sent for recycling within one year of the accumulation start date. For labels or collections, contact OSEH Hazardous Materials Management at 763-4568.

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HOW IS CONSUMER ELECTRONIC WASTE RECYCLED?

E-waste is shipped to a contracted recycling vendor. There the e-waste is manually disassembled and components are sorted in a secure facility. Printed circuit boards, hard drives and computer chips are shredded. Each part, whether metal plastic or glass, is recycled domestically. These components are recycled into automotive parts and glass, fiberglass, sign posts, light bulbs, bottles, beads, benches and plastic lumber.

WHY RECYCLE CONSUMER ELECTRONIC WASTE?

Many electronic devices contain hazardous materials that can have a negative impact on the environment if not managed properly.

Electronics can contain lead, mercury, cadmium, chromium, nickel, zinc, silver, gold, lithium, beryllium and brominated flame retardants. Keeping e-waste out of our landfills prevents the leaching or emitting of toxic materials into our water and air.

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Consumer Electronics include:

- computers
- computer accessories
- keyboards
- microwaves
- telephones
- cell phones
- printers
- fax machines
- copy machines
- remote controls
- PDA’s

Universal Waste Label

Contact OSEH for more information, to order labels, or to request a collection:

Occupational Safety & Environmental Health, Hazardous Materials Management Program (734) 763-4568

Electronic waste at Property Disposition.