



End-of-life information technology (IT) and consumer electronic equipment (e-waste) includes obsolete or end-of-life computer equipment (monitors, printers, etc) and consumer electronics (television sets).

In 2005, an estimated 67,000 tonnes of e-waste from homes, offices, businesses and schools will be available for recycling or disposal in Canada. If improperly disposed of, e-waste can cause ecological damage and contamination of water supplies.

Objective

To develop an industry led e-waste stewardship (recycling) program similar to the Scrap Tire Management and the Used Oil Material Recycling Programs.

EPB 257



Saskatchewan
Environment

Environmental
Protection
Branch

Fact Sheet

Proposed End-of-Life Information Technology Equipment and Consumer Electronics (e-waste) Recycling Program

Issue

The disposal of e-waste is emerging as an important issue as the volume of this type of waste continues to increase each year. E-waste contains many valuable, recoverable materials such as aluminum, ferrous metals, copper, gold and silver.

It also contains significant amounts of toxic or hazardous materials including mercury, lead, cadmium, beryllium, chromium, antimony, brominated flame-retardants and polyvinyl chlorides which cause concern for the safety of ground and surface water sources and human and ecosystem health if inadequately disposed of in landfills.

Background

In 1999, Saskatchewan consumers generated an estimated 1,100 tonnes of e-waste for disposal. The amount of e-waste destined for disposal is expected to more than double by 2005. Prior to the year, 2000, owners of e-waste had little option but to store or improperly dispose of unwanted equipment, as there were no opportunities to recycle the equipment.

Recognizing the need for an outlet to recycle e-waste, SARCAN Recycling conducted pilot projects at its sheltered workshops in Prince Albert, Wadena and Yorkton beginning in December, 2000. In less than two years, approximately 22,100 units were received at the workshops without any advertising.

In 2002, A&B Sound, a Western Canada retailer, conducted an e-waste recycling project of its own, collecting 50 tonnes in Regina. Due to popular demand to continue their project, A&B Sound again collected e-waste in 2003, demonstrating the public's desire for an e-waste stewardship program.

In December, 2002, Electronics Product Stewardship Canada (EPS Canada), supported by the Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC), representing major telecommunications organizations and Electro-Federation Canada, was formed.

EPS Canada, representing IT and the consumer electronic sectors, is mandated to work with provincial governments across the country to develop and design appropriate programs for the collection and recycling of e-waste such as personal computers, laptop computers, printers and television products. Saskatchewan has joined with the three other western provinces to work with EPS Canada.

Review

In Canada, there are currently no formal/legislated provincial stewardship e-waste programs in place. Manitoba has drafted e-waste regulations; Alberta and British Columbia are at the consultation stage with stakeholders and potential program managers. The Federal government, Provinces and Territories have had discussions on the issue and informally agreed that as much as possible, changes to consumers will be consistent.

Estimated range of recycling charges to be placed on new equipment are expected to be:

- computer monitors, \$10 - \$15 each;
- central processing units, \$7 - \$10 each;
- laptops, \$2 - \$3 each;
- printers, \$6 - \$10 each; and
- television sets, \$20 - \$25 each.

It is estimated that a provincial e-waste stewardship program in Saskatchewan could provide employment for 77 full-time positions.

Proposal

1. Develop supporting regulations by early 2005, for the implementation of a province-wide e-waste recycling program in the Spring of 2005.
2. It is expected that the stewardship program will be led, funded and managed by industry by applying the consumer/user pay principle.
3. To ensure the efficient development and effective operation of an e-waste recycling program in the province, flexibility will be given to industry to stage the location and operations of the collection depots.
4. Saskatchewan Environment (SE) will encourage industry to engage/use existing recycling depots/systems for the collection and possibly processing of e-waste.

We Want Your Input

SE values the opinions of stakeholders during the decision-making process in developing new programs. For more information or to provide comments, please contact:

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