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Recycling Tidbits

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Disposing of Electronics

A U.S. Environmental Protection Agency study estimated that about 2.37 million tons of TVs, cell phones and computer products were ready for recycling, reuse or disposal in 2009. Of these electronics, only about 25 percent (by weight) were collected for recycling. Most were thrown away, primarily in landfills.

Electronics contain many valuable reusable materials such as plastics, metals (gold, silver, platinum and aluminum), and glass. By recycling or reusing these materials we lessen the impact to source new or virgin materials. Many electronics also contain hazardous or harmful materials including lead, mercury, cadmium, chromium and chemical flame retardants. When improperly

disposed of, these chemicals can pollute our soil and can harm human health.

According to the WI Department of Natural Resources, improperly handled e-waste may also pose health risks to workers in the United States and in developing countries.



Stump the Grump

What year was the first cathode ray tube (CRT) invented?

Answer page 3.



Recycling Process

After electronics are dropped off at an Area Collection Station or the Transfer and Recycling Center, they are sent to Dynamic Recycling in Onaska for recycling and processing. Once they arrive at the recycler, they are weighed and sorted by type of electronic, i.e. televisions, computer monitors, laptops, computer towers, etc., and moved to their respective area in the processing facility. Workers analyze certain elec-

tronics or parts to see if they can be refurbished and resold. For example if a computer monitor looks to be in good working condition, employees will hook it up to a tester to ensure it works before reselling the monitor through online sales. If items cannot be refurbished, they are dismantled by hand for parts.

Components are separated and sorted for sale to the next market. Plastics are baled and sold to recyclers

to be made into lawn furniture or non-food grade containers. Memory sticks or ram are sold to smelters who melt and separate the different metals. Metals such as gold or silver may be sold to jewelers. Aluminum or steel could be sold to the automotive industry or reused in electronics. Leaded glass is sold to smelters to remove the lead. The glass may then be sold to tile manufacturers.

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Dynamic Recycling



Recently, staff members from Dunn County Solid Waste attended Dynamic Recycling’s re-grand opening of their new processing facility. We were rewarded with a one of a kind tour. During the tour we saw how electronics were safely dismantled by hand. Parts are removed sorted while others were shredded and baled for the next recycling process. Harmful materials were carefully handled and all staff wore protective gear. Items containing confidential information such as hard drives were destroyed by shredding. They also



Employees dismantling computer monitors and televisions by hand.

had an amazing recycling program for wood, plastic film and bags, and lunch waste.

Dynamic Recycling goes above and beyond to make sure their employees are treated well. They offer staff an onsite fitness center, arcade games, pool table and golf simulator. Employees have many options to relax, play or workout before work, during breaks or after work.

Tours like these are very important to our program. We want to ensure that whomever we contract with is responsible and takes accountability for all materials on site and then downstream once parts are sold for further processing. This means anything we send to Dynamic Recycling will not be burned, landfilled or illegally dumped. They have multiple certifications that guarantee this won’t



Baled plastic.



TV’s stacked and ready for dismantling.

happen. Their certifications require verification of the company’s responsibility to the environment and well-being and safety of its employees. Furthermore, Dynamic Recycling has outstanding customer service as well as reasonable prices to recycle materials.

All in all, if improperly handled or recycled, electronics could end up burned, mishandled, scrapped for valuable parts, or illegally thrown into ditches or the landfill. We at Dunn County Solid Waste do everything in our power to make sure the recycler we choose won’t allow this to happen. Sometimes our electronics may pile up until we find the perfect recycler, but you’ll always be able to trust we will find the right recycler to get your materials properly recycled.

Recycle with Best Buy

Best Buy contracts with certified electronic recyclers so you can bring your electronics directly to them for recycling as well. They accept almost all electronic devices. Call your local store for complete details or visit them online at www.bestbuy.com and type in the keyword *Recycling*.

Since Best Buy takes electronics for free they have a few restrictions on tube TVs and computer monitors.

Both must be 32 inches or smaller in diameter, the cathode ray tube cannot be exposed and they will not accept console TVs.

Bring electronics to the service or Geek Squad desk. Employees will tell you where to set the materials.

Lastly, they limit recycling to three items a day per household.

FUN FACT:

Since the program's introduction, Best Buy has collected more than 1 billion pounds of electronics and appliances for recycling. They are committed to continue working with recyclers to collect 2 billion pounds of electronics and appliances by 2020.

INTERESTING...

One billion pounds of electronic waste is equivalent to the weight of 4,000 great blue whales!



Stump the Grump

The cathode ray tube or CRT was invented in 1897 by German physicist Karl Ferdinand Braun. Braun was able to project a fluorescent image onto a screen using his invention. It only took a few years for what Braun did to reach the rest of the

world and entice a race to invent a working television. Many scientist tried, failed and succeeded. However, it wasn't until 1929 when the first CRT for primitive TVs was patented. Vladimir Kosma Zworykin is credited for its invention.

Three short years later, Allen B. Du Mont improved on Vladimir's CRT. Mont made the first practical and durable CRT for colored TVs.



Karl Ferdinand Braun

Electronic Pick-up

Did you notice the pile of electronics have slowly disappeared from our Area Collection Stations? Thanks to our dedicated office member, Mee Yang, and some strong arms through Manpower and Express Employment Professionals the electronics were cleaned up!

It was not an easy undertaking as the electronics were manually loaded into gaylord boxes (4 feet x 4 feet x 4 feet cardboard boxes) and stacked on pallets which were then loaded onto a rented truck. Once the truck was load it was taken to the Transfer Station where they were off loaded once again and reloaded onto a semi truck destined to end up at Dynamic Recycling.

As the clean up crew can attest, it was hard work! They used many (20 or more) cans of bee and wasp spray to keep all the stings at bay.



And of course, it happened to be some of the hottest days of summer while they were out there for 3 weeks doing it all.



A pair of strong arms that helped us with the pick-ups. We couldn't have done it without them!!

Did you know Dunn County residents recycled over 275,980 pounds of electronics in 2014?!



Lead Attendant at our Transfer Station, John Reneau, and Recycling and Support Specialist, Mee Yang, stacking TVs for shipment.



The large truck we rented for 3 weeks to pick up all the electronics and transport them to the Transfer Station.



Teamwork!!