



How should I dispose of Electronic Waste?

More than 20 million personal computers became obsolete in 1998 alone. That number is expected to grow to an estimated 315 million by 2004. Computers, televisions, monitors, audio equipment, printers and other electronic devices can contain toxic metals such as lead, mercury, cadmium and chromium. That is why it is *illegal* to dispose of these devices into the regular trash. Following collection by Surplus and Salvage, recyclable metals, plastic, and glass are recovered and any toxic materials properly disposed.

Computers contain numerous heavy metals. For example, cathode ray tubes (CRTs) - computer monitors - have high levels of lead in the glass, as well as mercury, cadmium, and phosphorous in the vacuum tubes. The CRT makes up about two-thirds of the weight of a typical computer workstation. The lead in a monitor is about eight percent by weight, and glass more than 18 pounds in a 17-inch monitor; these both can be recycled. Printed wired boards are another highly marketable component; they may be recycled into computers for schools and non-profit organizations.

The new flat screen monitors do not contain hazardous materials and consequently do not pose the same environmental risk.

To recycle intact CRTs:

CALL SURPLUS AND SALVAGE (814-865-4371)

PSU has made arrangements for the proper management of unwanted CRT devices. Most are sold to the public, some to school districts for a nominal fee, and the remainder are sent to a recycling facility. If you have an intact, unwanted computer monitor or other CRT device, please ask your Department equipment custodian to make arrangements with Surplus and Salvage for pickup (814-865-4371 or wlg1@psu.edu).

Broken CRTs

CALL THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND SAFETY (814-865-6391)

Cracked CRTs may be a health hazard so it is important to contain any broken glass immediately. Sweep up the glass, place it in a bag or box, and label it with the words "Broken CRT for EH&S." Store the container or bag in a safe place where it won't be confused with regular trash, and call EH&S for pickup (814-865-6391 or myers@ehs.psu.edu) or fill out a request for pick up on the EHS web page, www.ehs.psu.edu. If you have any questions about this information, please contact the Office of Environment, Health & Safety at 814-865-6391 or myers@ehs.psu.edu. Thank you for doing your part to protect the environment and meet regulatory requirements.