

Wisconsin's New E-waste Law – Implications for Local Governments

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Wisconsin's electronics recycling law will go into effect in January of 2010. This law is a "Product Stewardship" approach that requires manufacturers of certain consumer electronics to assume financial responsibility for the collection and recycling of used electronics. In the past waste electronics or e-waste has been collected on a voluntary basis from residents by many municipalities. The new law also shifts the recycling burden from local units of government to retailers and manufactures based upon the weight of consumer electronic devices sold in Wisconsin.

What does this new law do?

- Prohibits the disposal of various electronic devices such as: computers, computer monitors, printers, televisions, VCRs, DVD players, and telephones with video displays.
- Requires manufacturers to collect or contract with others to collect eligible electronic devices (EEDs) from households and K-12 public schools.
- Provides an incentive to collect EEDs from rural counties – For every one pound of eligible electronic devices collected from households in one of the 39 rural counties defined in the bill the manufactures can receive a credit of 1.25 pounds towards their recycling requirement.

Landfill and incineration bans effective Sept. 1, 2010 include:

Consumer computers
Computer peripherals,
Televisions and other video display devices,
Fax machines,
VCRs and DVD players,
Consumer printers,
Phones with video displays (cell phones)

One result of this new law is communities may decide to discontinue collecting these materials for recycling and rely upon manufacturers and recyclers to provide recycling opportunities for residents. The only requirement for local units of government identified in the law is as follows: *Local units of government responsible for recycling must provide information about e-waste collection events or opportunities and the reasons for recycling to their residents.* *

Some communities may choose to take a more active role in ensuring residents have access to recycling services for their used electronics. Here are two possible options for enhancing recycling opportunities in your community:

- Partner with collectors and recyclers to provide recycling opportunities – In order to ensure residents have opportunities to recycle e-waste a local unit of government may choose to recruit recyclers to set up collection events or facilities in their community.
- Act as a collector or contract directly with a recycler/collector to provide recycling opportunities for residents.

CED or "Covered Electronic Device" is a consumer video display device, a consumer computer or consumer printer

EED or "Eligible Electronic Device" is an electronic device such as a computers computer monitor, printer, television, VCR,