

Protecting Our Environment

Safely Disposing Of Old Computers

(NAPSA)—Many people don't realize that the way they dispose of old electronics could be hazardous to their health. The toxins found in old computers, televisions, cell phones or digital music players can harm children and the environment if they're not safely disposed of. Fortunately, there are safe alternatives.

Electronic waste, or e-waste, has grown to be a major problem in recent years. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 250 million computers will become obsolete in the next five years. Mobile phones will be discarded at a rate of 130 million per year within the next few years, resulting in 65,000 tons of waste. And according to the International Association of Electronics Recyclers, about three million units of consumer electronics will be scrapped in the next decade.

Some discarded electronics end up in U.S. landfills, but many are shipped to third world countries. Children and other workers sort through the e-waste searching for parts and are paid several cents. They often do this without gloves, masks or goggles, suffering exposure to harmful chemicals, glass and other sharp objects.

In addition, discarded electronics contain substantial amounts of lead, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, mercury and brominated flame retardants.

To help people dispose of their used equipment without harm, Small Dog Electronics, an authorized Apple reseller in Waitsfield, Vt., has established a recycling and disposal program.

As a company that successfully



Recycling old electronics is an effective way to protect the environment from toxic chemicals.

makes a living selling personal technologies, they want to help minimize the problem. The first step is to inform consumers about the hazards of improper electronics disposal and providing resources and a location to properly handle their waste.

Recycling creates 100 more jobs than disposal. Valuable materials such as steel, glass, plastic and precious metals can be recovered from recycling. Recycling also prevents toxic materials from damaging the environment. Donation to charities, nonprofits and schools are other options for passing on electronics.

For more information on how to safely dispose of computers and other electronics, or to find links to recycling resources in your area, visit the Web site at www.smalldog.com/ewaste.