

LOCAL E-CYCLING RESOURCES

Best Buy–

Location: 217 Independence Blvd and 3334 Princess Anne Road

What they accept: In store recycling programs include: cell phones, rechargeable batteries and ink & toner cartridges. One other option is a Trade In program that they offer. You can offset the price of purchasing new electronics at Best Buy by trading in your existing electronics items. Go to www.bestbuytradein.com for more information.

Charge? No

Dell Inc. –

Location: Online Service Only

What they accept: The no-strings-attached program does not require customers to buy a new Dell product in order to recycle an old one. Dell will pick up any of its branded electronics, such as computers and printers, at no charge from customers' homes. Those wanting to recycle their Dell product can go online at www.dell4me.com/recycling, enter a product identification number, print out a prepaid shipping label and schedule home pickup.

Charge? Yes – unless buying a new Dell Computer at the same time

Gateway –

Location: Online Service Only

What they accept: Consumers can trade-in their old Gateway Computer for credit towards the purchase of a new Gateway Computer – visit gateway.eztradein.com for more information.

Charge? Yes

Goodwill Services –

Location: Various locations throughout Virginia Beach – visit www.goodwill.org for specific locations.

What they accept: Varies by location. Some local Goodwill Centers train workers to refurbish and de-manufacture equipment and resell systems and components, thereby avoiding high disposal costs. Contact your local Goodwill to find out what types of electronic equipment may be donated.

Charge? No

Hewlett Packard –

Location: Online Service Only

What they accept: Anyone wanting to recycle their Hewlett Packard product can go online at www.hp.com/recycling, receive a quote, print out a prepaid shipping label and schedule a home pickup.

Charge? Yes

M & W Computer Services –

Location: 460 Garrison Place, Virginia Beach, VA 23452

Contact Information: 757.497.2562 email - gary.mnwcomp@cavtel.net website: <http://mnwcomp.com/recycling>

What they accept: All small computers and accessories - regardless of the condition or age.

Charge? Yes. Drop-off program for small quantities, and pickup service for larger quantities. Visit their website for information on fees.

Synergy Recycling LLC

Location: 810 Granby Street, Norfolk, VA; Open 9 – 5, Mon - Fri

Contact: 339-4010, ddibean@synergyrecycling.com

What they accept: Computers and accessories; also accept batteries.

Charge: A fee may be charged for some items

Office Depot –

Location: Various locations throughout Virginia Beach – visit www.officedepot.com for specific locations.

What they accept: In store recycling programs include: cell phones, rechargeable batteries and ink & toner cartridges.

You can also purchase a box from any Office Depot location, fill with as many items will fit within weight limit and return (unsealed) to any Office Depot location. Items accepted include Monitors, Desktop PCs, Laptops, Fax Machines, Printer, Scanners, Keyboards, Mice, Drives, Telephones, Digital Cameras, Video Cameras, VCRs, DVD Players, MP3 Players, Small TVs, Cords & Cables

Charge? None for in-store recycling program (cell phones, rechargeable batteries and ink & toner cartridges)

Yes for all others - \$5 for a small box – max 20lbs; \$10 for a medium box – max 40lbs; \$15 for a large box – max 60lbs

TIPS FOR DONATING YOUR OLD COMPUTER

As more companies, organizations, and individuals find reasons to upgrade their computer equipment, the problem of disposing of old equipment grows. In 2005, used or unwanted electronics amounted to approximately 1.9 to 2.2 million tons. Of that, about 1.5 to 1.9 million tons were primarily discarded in landfills, and only 345,000 to 379,000 tons were recycled.

Determine if your old computer can be reused. If you have a computer that is less than five years old, chances are that it can be put to good use by someone else. It works best for everyone involved if you can donate your equipment to a nonprofit or school-based refurbisher rather than directly to a charity or school, especially if you need to wipe your hard drive or are not sure of the condition of your equipment. Refurbishers will ensure that equipment passed on to nonprofits and schools is working well and runs legal copies of software. They also know how to properly dispose of non-usable parts, so-called "e-waste." Refurbishers work with newer equipment, usually Pentium-level computers or newer that can run current Internet

programs. If your computer is more than five years old, it will be best to send it to a commercial recycler. For listings of refurbishers, please visit the TechSoup computer recycling listing for donors: www.techsoup.org

Recycle old and broken PC equipment. Any equipment that is not working or that is below Pentium- or Mac Power PC-level should be tagged for recycling. Recyclers are businesses or organizations that remove useful parts and then break down the rest of the materials, as we do with bottles and cans. They also safely remove hazardous materials. Note: Some of these organizations may charge a fee to accept old PC's and equipment for recycling—especially computer monitors.

Contact the refurbisher or recycler before donating. Call the organization or check for details on its Web site to ensure that it accepts the type of computer you plan to give away. Some refurbishing organizations, for example, do not accept anything older than a Pentium or Pentium II. While you may be inclined to donate equipment directly to a favorite local school or charity, refurbishers are generally better equipped to repair and upgrade computers. They then pass on ready-to-use equipment to nonprofits, schools and the low-income population at a low cost or for free.

Remember the accessories. If you can, include the keyboard, mouse, printer, modem, packaged software, or any other accessories. Schools and charitable organizations can almost always put them to good use. Most organizations only accept complete systems.

If possible, keep the operating system intact. If you are donating hardware with a pre-installed Microsoft operating system, keep in mind that the license is only valid when used on the original OEM machine on which it was first installed. Since charitable organizations usually cannot afford to purchase and license new operating systems, a legal transfer (keeping the machine and operating system together) can be very helpful. Linux and Mac operating systems have different requirements, but we urge that whenever possible, please pass on the operating system software with all donated computers.

Provide the original media and documentation. It's helpful to have the original disks, media, and documentation that came with the PC when it was purchased. Include the proof of license, which will help facilitate the legal transfer of the operating system.

If you clean your computer of personal information yourself, it's best to use some disk cleaning software to delete your Internet browser's cache, cookies, history, your e-mail contacts and messages, your documents, your recycle or trash folder, and non-transferable software. The best thing to do is to use a disk cleaning utility that overwrites data so that is unrecoverable.

Here are some examples of disk cleaning utilities:

Commercial Windows Disk Cleaning Software

- Wipe Info feature in Norton Utilities and System Works – www.symantec.com
- Paragon Disk Wiper – www.disk-wiper.net
- Webroot Window Washer – www.webroot.com
- Tracks Eraser Pro – www.acesoft.net
- Wipedrive – www.whitecanyon.com

Freeware Windows Disk Cleaning Software (all available at www.Shareware.com)

- Eraser
- Active@ Kill Disk: Hard Drive Eraser
- Disk Cleaner
- Sure Delete
- BCWipe (shareware)

Macintosh Disk Cleaning Software

- Wipe Info feature in Norton Utilities - www.symantec.com
- iClean – www.aladdin.com
- SuperScrubber – www.jiiva.com

If the PC is still under a manufacturer's warranty, you can call the company's technical services and ask for specifics on how to delete personal files.

Follow PC delivery instructions. Many recycling and refurbishing organizations have specific locations where a PC can be donated, while others have delivery instructions they expect donors to follow.

Keep a list of what you donated for your records. Remember that tax season will be coming up. You are very likely eligible for a tax donation if you donate to a nonprofit refurbisher. Most school or nonprofit refurbishers can provide a tax receipt upon request. Business donors can deduct the un-depreciated value of the computer, and individuals can deduct the current market value of a computer.

Plan for future donations. Save a box from the recycling bin and use it to store the documents that came with your new PC. When the time comes around to donate that PC, everything will be in one place.