

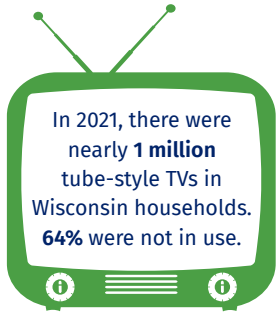
E-cycling in Wisconsin, by the numbers

Wisconsin has an electronics recycling law to increase the amount of electronics recycled and to make recycling easier for consumers. The law makes it illegal to put many electronics in the trash and requires electronics manufacturers to help cover the cost of responsible recycling. E-Cycle Wisconsin, the manufacturer-funded electronics recycling program set up by the law, has had many successes since it began in 2010, but there is still work to do.

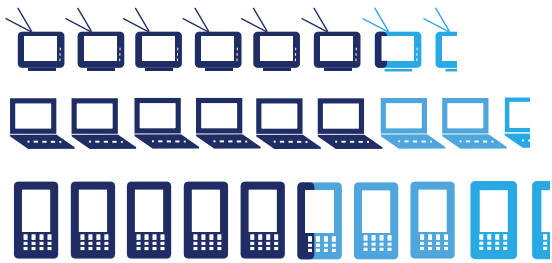
E-waste

Wisconsin households are using and storing millions of electronics

There are approximately **7.6 million** TVs, **8.3 million** computers and **9.3 million** cellphones in Wisconsin homes. Many of these devices are **unused and ready for disposal**.



If you lined up all the unused computers stored in Wisconsin households they would stretch from Eau Claire to St. Louis.



Of the **25.2 million** devices in Wisconsin homes, **7.6 million** are unused.

Each icon = 1 million devices ■ = unused

Successes

E-Cycle Wisconsin has made recycling more convenient and supports local recycling businesses

More than **370 million pounds** of electronics have been recycled through E-Cycle Wisconsin since the program began in January 2010.



By recycling these devices instead of landfilling them, we've reduced carbon dioxide emissions by about **150,000 metric tons**—about the same amount as using 17 million fewer gallons of gasoline.

Since 2010, E-Cycle Wisconsin has recovered about **52 million pounds of steel** from electronics. That's enough to make **22,000 cars**.



E-cycling

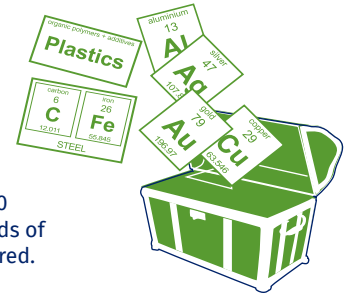
Recycling electronics saves energy, water and tons of materials

Recycling 1 million laptops saves the energy required to power 3,657 U.S. homes for a year.

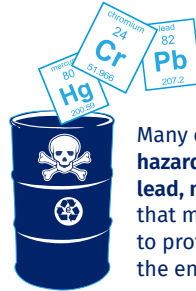


House icon = 50 Houses

The **steel, aluminum and plastic** in electronics can easily be reused to make new materials. Each electronic device also contains small amounts of **precious metals**.



For every 1 million cellphones we recycle, 35,000 pounds of copper, 772 pounds of silver, 75 pounds of gold and 33 pounds of palladium can be recovered.



Many electronics also contain **hazardous materials** such as **lead, mercury and batteries** that must be handled safely to protect human health and the environment.



Challenges

Wisconsinites still have much to learn about e-cycling

Responsible recycling has a cost

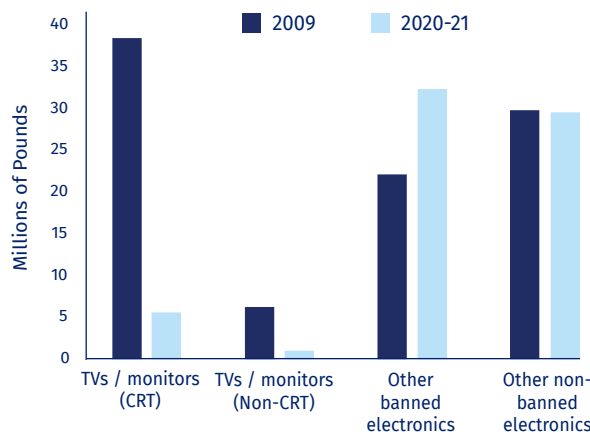
25% of Wisconsinites do not want to pay anything to recycle electronics.

92% of E-Cycle Wisconsin collectors charge a fee to accept some types of electronics.

This disconnect can lead to illegal dumping.



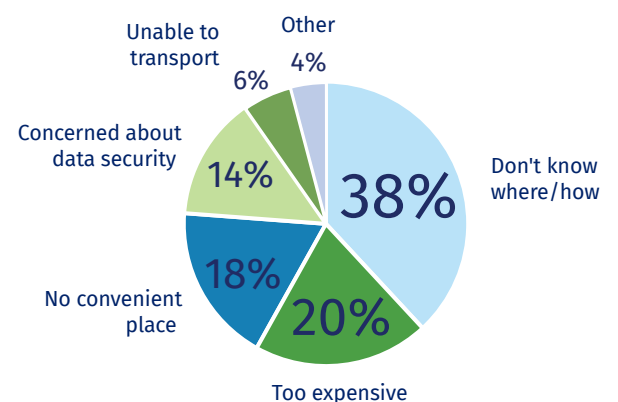
What DNR waste studies tell us



Sorters of waste headed to Wisconsin landfills in 2009 and 2020-21 found a significant decrease in TVs and monitors, but an increase in smaller electronics. Recycling is free for many of these smaller devices, and many contain lithium batteries that can cause fires if damaged, so keeping them out of the trash is a top priority.

Why some people don't e-cycle

In a 2021 DNR survey, Wisconsin residents cited several barriers to recycling electronics. Not knowing where or how to do so and cost were the most frequent responses.



Help take e-cycling further...

- ✓ Take old electronics to a registered collector or use a mail-back program for recycling.
- ✓ Visit dnr.wi.gov and search "ecycle" to find a collection site or mail-back program.
- ✓ If necessary, pay a small fee to ensure proper recycling.

Sources: Results from the Wisconsin DNR's 2021 household recycling survey; DNR's 2020-21 statewide waste characterization study; E-Cycle Wisconsin 2022 report; Quantitative Characterization of Domestic and Transboundary Flows of Used Electronics: Analysis of Generation, Collection and Export in the United States, December 2013, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and National Center for Electronics Recycling; U.S. EPA Waste Reduction Model, accessed Nov. 2021.

This publication is available in alternative format (large print, Braille, audio tape, etc.) upon request. Please call (608) 266-2111 for more information.

Originally designed in 2013 by John Miller, Gray Jay Graphics



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Waste and Materials Management Program
P.O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707
DNRWie-cycling@wisconsin.gov

Printed on Recycled Paper

PUB-WA-1716 2022