

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



## OnCampus ecoAmbassadors

OnCampus ecoAmbassadors are college students who implement projects from EPA's partnership programs to help carry out the Agency's mission to protect human health and the environment. The program is open to ANY college student, regardless of program, age, or background. All interested students are encouraged to participate.

### Did You Know?

- The computer and electronic waste stream is growing rapidly in the United States ; it is growing three times faster than any other waste material that we generate
- Americans dispose of 12 to 14 million computers a year
- Computers and electronics contain components that can be hazardous to the environment: cathode ray tubes contain lead, while circuit boards contain hazardous metals including chromium, cadmium, and mercury

### Learn More

For more information, please visit [www.epa.gov/wastewise/](http://www.epa.gov/wastewise/)



## Electronics Recycling (E-cycling) Project

Electronics at the end of their useful life take up space and can cause environmental problems if they are not discarded properly. These electronics represent a rapidly growing portion of our trash, continuously waste valuable resources, and contain hazardous or toxic materials. Pollution caused by hazardous material can be avoided, and valuable natural resources can be conserved, by properly dismantling electronics and identifying opportunities for reuse. Through the WasteWise Electronic Recycling (E-cycling) Project, you will have the opportunity to explore alternative options to discarding e-waste, and do your part in keeping the earth green!

### Goals of the E-cycling Project

- Reuse, upgrade, or remanufacture electronic waste
- Adopt e-cycling practices as an effective alternative to the disposal
- Educate students about the hazards that electronics pose to the environment
- Empower and motivate fellow students to recycle old electronics

### If You're Interested In:

- Working with the facilities staff on your campus
- Collecting data on alternatives for e-waste disposal
- Designing an e-cycling program and identifying ways to track its progress
- Motivating students to change their behavior
- Partnering with local businesses

**... then the E-cycling Project is for you!**

See page 2 for a step-by-step checklist for the E-cycling Project.



### Students Taking Action

Jackson State University created the Computer Recycling and Training Project to increase awareness about computer recycling and create jobs for the local economy. This program provides on-site job training for low-income individuals, teaching them valuable skills needed for employment. Through newspaper advertising, the program has collected more than 16,000 pounds of computers and computer components from area colleges and universities, businesses, private homes, and state and local agencies. Volunteers and participants refurbished the computers for redistribution in the community, and recycled computers that could not be refurbished.

The E-cycling Project is ideal for students pursuing degrees in business, environmental science, engineering, and public policy.

## Checklist for the E-cycling Project

Follow the steps below to empower students, faculty, and others on your campus.

### ☐ 1. Identify opportunities to reduce waste on your campus.

After the school year ends, conduct an e-waste assessment as students get rid of old computers, televisions, and other electronics. Contact facilities management to see how they dispose of unwanted electronics and the tech department to see if they are involved in an e-cycling program for outdated equipment.

### ☐ 2. Identify potential waste recycling and reduction activities.

Conduct a brainstorming session to identify potential waste recycling and reduction activities. Potential activities include:

- donating reusable electronic equipment to local schools or other nonprofit organizations
- buying remanufactured equipment
- leasing electronics
- recycling equipment that cannot be reused

### ☐ 3. Kick off your program.

Hold a kickoff event to promote your program and encourage students and faculty to participate. Hold additional meetings with environmental and other relevant groups on your campus to explain how your program will help your school reduce waste and reduce its climate footprint. Document your participation in the event by taking photos throughout the day and sharing them on the OnCampus Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/epaoncampus](http://www.facebook.com/epaoncampus).

### ☐ 4. Track and measure your progress.

Use the WasteWise Re-TRAC system to track and report your activities, and continue to update your success. Share the WasteWise Re-TRAC reports and your results with student groups and administrators to publicize the environmental and economic benefits of your program.

For more information on how to use Re-TRAC, go to:  
[www.epa.gov/osw/partnerships/wastewise/retrac.htm](http://www.epa.gov/osw/partnerships/wastewise/retrac.htm).

### ☐ 5. Get a sponsor.

Many big box-electronic retailers (such as Best Buy, Target, and Walmart) sponsor e-cycling. Research stores in your area that have programs, and contact them to see if they'll help you out! To start your search, check out the EPA compiled list of e-recyclers: [www.epa.gov/osw/conserve/materials/ecycling/donate.htm](http://www.epa.gov/osw/conserve/materials/ecycling/donate.htm).

### ☐ 6. Fill out your completion form.

Record the information that you are required to report to EPA on the event completion form, including your name, date of the event, name of your college, a description of the event or events, the number of interactions (include any interesting comments), and additional comments.

## Resources

### Join WasteWise

WasteWise is a program that helps organizations save money, improve efficiency, and reduce their climate footprint through waste reduction. Your school can join WasteWise as a "partner" or as an "endorser."

Learn more and join WasteWise at:

[www.epa.gov/epawaste/partnerships/wastewise/join.htm](http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/partnerships/wastewise/join.htm)

### Tips for Successful Events

1. Find a suitable space.
2. Put up posters to advertise the event.
3. Create a Facebook event.
4. Ask friends to spread the word.
5. Plan to have snacks available – find out if you can get donations.
6. Arrange for music at the event.
7. Arrive early to set up the space, including snacks and music.
8. Use sign-up sheets to record attendance.
9. Create a written summary of the event.

### EPA Contact Info

#### WasteWise

(800) EPA-WISE

[oswwastewise@epa.gov](mailto:oswwastewise@epa.gov)

Allow a few days for a return call. Contact the OnCampus team if there is no response from the WasteWise helpline.

#### EPA OnCampus Team

[EPAOnCampus@epa.gov](mailto:EPAOnCampus@epa.gov)

### EPA OnCampus Websites

Visit the EPA website at

[www.epa.gov/ecoambassadors/oncampus](http://www.epa.gov/ecoambassadors/oncampus)



Join the conversation at

[www.facebook.com/epaoncampus](http://www.facebook.com/epaoncampus)