

National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme - a guide for householders

This fact sheet provides the community with essential information about the new Television and Computer Recycling Scheme.

WHAT IS THE SCHEME?

The new National Television and Computer Recycling Scheme will provide Australian householders and small business with access to free recycling services for televisions and computers.

While regulations underpinning the Scheme commenced on 8 November 2011, it will take time for services to be approved and established. The first services provided under the Scheme will start to roll-out in 2012, expanding across metropolitan, regional and remote areas by the end of 2013. Information on services near you will be provided as the services are set up.

The Scheme will accept all televisions, computers, printers and computer products (such as keyboards, mice and hard drives) for recycling, regardless of brand, and no matter how old they are. Householders will be able to drop these items at a designated collection service, which may include a permanent drop-off point, local retailers, a take-back event or a mail-back option.

The Scheme is regulated by the Australian Government under the *Product Stewardship Act 2011* and is a key component of Australia's National Waste Policy. State and territory governments retain responsibility for regulating waste.

WHAT WILL IT ACHIEVE?

The Scheme aims to lift television and computer recycling from the current low rate of around 17 per cent to 80 per cent by 2021-22. This is important because these products contain valuable materials that can be re-used, as well as substances which are hazardous to humans and the environment.

As it is implemented, the Scheme will provide people with greater choice for recycling when disposing of televisions and computers while helping Australia's recycling industry to grow. Over time it is likely the Scheme will replace existing collection services, including those provided by state and local governments – which will reduce costs for government and, through them, the community.

HOW WILL IT WORK?

The Scheme will be funded and run by industry. The television and computer industry is now required by law to collect televisions and computers for recycling, and meet progressive recycling targets and criteria for safety and good environmental practice. All Scheme recycling arrangements must be approved by government.

Householders and small business won't have to pay fees at the time of disposal.

WHEN WILL I SEE A FREE SERVICE?

Collection services will be introduced gradually from mid 2012. Information on where and how to access free collection services will be publicised in your area as they become available.

WHAT CAN I DO IN THE MEANTIME?

Televisions and computers contain materials which are hazardous both to humans and the environment when disposed of inappropriately. There are penalties for dumping of these products, including outside collection sites and charity bins.

The Scheme is designed to build on existing recycling services that are already available. Unwanted televisions and computers can be disposed of now by:

- Asking second-hand shops or a charity if they will take them (if they're still in working order)
- Passing them on to friends or family
- Using local council or other recycling services (contact your local council for more information)
- Storing them out of the weather until access to the Scheme is available in your area

Please note that if you are switching to digital television, it is less expensive and more environmentally friendly to buy a digital set-top box or digital television recorder than to replace and dispose of your current television.

DID YOU KNOW?

- 138,000 tonnes of new television, computers and computer products were sold in Australia in 2007-08
- In the same year 106,000 tonnes (16.8 million units) were disposed of. This is close to 5kg or one unit per person
- In 2007-08 only 10 per cent (by weight) of these were recycled and the rest went to landfill
- The volume of televisions and computers reaching the end of their useful life is expected to reach 181,000 tonnes or 44 million units by 2027-28
- This will be a 171 per cent increase in weight terms
- Scheme targets commence at 30 per cent in 2012/13 rising to 80 per cent by 2021/2022

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MORE INFORMATION

For further information please contact ewaste@environment.gov.au or visit <http://www.environment.gov.au/ewaste>

