



OFFICE OF THE FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL EXECUTIVE
WHITE HOUSE TASK FORCE ON WASTE PREVENTION AND RECYCLING
1200 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, NW MAIL CODE 16005 WASHINGTON, DC 20460
(202) 564-1297 WWW.OFEE.GOV TASK_FORCE@OFEE.GOV

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP THROUGHOUT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

For release Monday, November 15, 2004

Federal Agencies Commit to Promote Sustainable Environmental Stewardship of their Electronic Assets

For more information contact: Juan Lopez, 202/564-5214, juan.lopez@ofee.gov

Today, the White House, together with eleven Federal Departments and Agencies, committed to advance the Federal government's electronics stewardship goals and practices.

The Executive Office of the President, Departments of Agriculture, Defense, Energy, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Interior, Justice, Transportation, Veterans Affairs, Environmental Protection Agency, and General Services Administration, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to develop and promote common strategies for using environmentally sustainable technologies and practices to improve the quality, performance, and environmental management of Federal electronic assets throughout their life cycle.

The Federal government invests significant resources in electronic assets. In FY 2005, it is anticipated that it will spend approximately \$60 billion on Information technology (IT) equipment, software, infrastructure and services. For computers alone, the Federal government represents about 7 percent of the world demand. This represents a tremendous opportunity to positively influence the marketplace.

Electronics are a new and rapidly growing segment of the waste stream. The United States discarded more than 2 million tons of electronics in 2001. Significant quantities of the nations' IT assets are ending up in storage closets, warehouses, or landfills or ending up overseas where there are lesser environmental standards for disposal than in the U.S.

Most of the Federal government's 1.8 million employees have a personal computer. Given a three-year life cycle, the government discards approximately 10,000 computers each week.

Edwin Piñero, the Federal Environmental Executive stated, "The combined purchasing power of the eleven agencies and departments who became charter signatories represents approximately \$50 billion, or 83 percent of the total annual IT budget for the Federal government. Together, we will shift the marketplace towards more environmentally-sound electronic products and services. Our combined purchasing power will help to transform the availability of IT products and services that are environmentally sustainable in the Federal marketplace and will make such products and services available for the general consumer as well."

The MOU signatories have committed themselves to the following electronics stewardship goals:

- To increase demand for more energy efficient and environmentally sustainable electronic equipment that is cost-effective, while maintaining or improving equipment quality and performance.
- To promote the implementation of best life cycle management practices for electronic equipment and share identified best practices with those outside of the Federal government.
- To reduce the economic and environmental life cycle costs of Federal electronic equipment.
- To promote the growth of the market and infrastructure for the reuse, demanufacturing, and recycling of obsolete electronic equipment; and
- To coordinate and cooperate on other public and private sector efforts aimed at achieving similar objectives.

Signatories have also become partners in the Federal Electronics Challenge (FEC). The FEC is a voluntary partnership program that encourages Federal departments, agencies and facilities to purchase more environmentally-sound electronic products, reduce impacts of electronic products during use, and manage obsolete electronics in an environmentally safe way. To date, in addition to the 11 agencies and departments, 24 Federal facilities, from 7 different Federal agencies, together representing more than 25,000 employees, have signed as partners to the FEC. These numbers are expected to grow dramatically as the MOU commits the signatories to actively sponsor participation of their facilities in the FEC. A list of the participating agencies and facilities is on the FEC website, www.federalelectronicchallenge.net.

“Through the implementation efforts under the MOU, and very specifically under the Federal Electronics Challenge, the signatory agencies will be able to not only promote the proper design, management, and disposition practices to conserve energy and protect the environment, but will also include acquisition practices that make economic sense and save taxpayer dollars,” said Edwin Piñero.

The MOU will be available at: www.ofee.gov.

#