

Recycle Your Cell Phone. It's An Easy Call.



As cell phones, computers, and Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) become more prominent in our everyday lives, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is taking steps to encourage consumers to recycle these products instead of adding them to our nation's landfills. As part of this initiative, EPA's Plug-In To eCycling program has teamed up with leading cell phone makers, service providers, and retailers to launch a national campaign encouraging Americans to recycle or donate their unwanted cell phones. The "Recycle Your Cell Phone. It's An Easy Call" campaign aims to increase the public's awareness of cell phone recycling and donation opportunities, with the ultimate goal of increasing the nation's cell phone recycling rate. Plug-In To eCycling partners supporting this campaign are: AT&T, Best Buy, LG Electronics, Motorola, Nokia, Office Depot, Palm, Samsung, Sony Ericsson, Sprint, Staples, T-Mobile, and Verizon Wireless.

To kick off the initiative, the Campaign has released a series of print public service announcements that highlight the convenience and environmental and social benefits of recycling a cell phone. EPA has also released a series of downloadable podcasts featuring experts in the electronics recycling field discussing the many ways that consumers can reuse and recycle their electronics and addressing many common questions and concerns. During 2008, look for the Campaign to host special cell phone collection events and increase publicity for our partners' recycling programs.

EPA has targeted cell phone recycling because, despite the large number of programs, most consumers still do not know where or how they can recycle their cell phones. Consequently, less than 20 percent of unwanted cell phones are recycled each year. Recycling cell phones leads to significant environmental savings and can benefit communities.

Recycling: an Easy Call - Every day there are thousands of opportunities to recycle cell phones and accessories. Many cell phone retailers, manufacturers, and service providers have ongoing collection programs where phones can be dropped off or mailed in—regardless of the age or brand. Some charitable organizations and state or municipal solid waste programs also offer cell phone recycling. In most cases, cell phone recycling is free.

Recycling: a Green Call - Recycling cell phones helps the environment by saving energy and keeping useable and valuable materials out of landfills and incinerators. Cell phones are made from precious metals, copper, and plastics—all of which require energy to mine and manufacture. Recycling these materials not only conserves resources, but prevents air and water pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, if all of the 100 million cell phones ready for end of life management in the U.S. are recycled, we could save enough energy to power more than 194,000 U.S. households with electricity for one year.

Recycling: a Social Call - Donating your cell phone also benefits your community. When cell phones and accessories are in good working condition, some programs donate them to a number of worthy charities or provide them for discounted sale to those who need them. In addition, many recycling programs use the proceeds to raise funds for charitable organizations, schools, churches and other social causes. In some cases, programs buy the phone back from the consumer.



To learn more, go to www.epa.gov/cellphones.