On April 6, 2009, EPA's Plug-In To eCycling program will announce a National Cell Phone Recycling Week 2009

We hope this new call to action will spur even more Americans to donate or recycle their unwanted cell phones, PDAs, and accessories. Perhaps we will be able to report even greater numbers of cell phones recycled next year.

As with last year's effort, I am hoping that you will be able to help EPA get the word out on the importance and ease of cell phone recycling.

What can you do? As a warm up to your Earth Day activities, you may be able to:

- (1) Hold a cell phone collection event at your Department, Agency or facility on, or about, National Cell Phone Recycling Week 2009 from April 6 April 12, 2009;
- (2) Highlight the importance and ease of cell phone recycling or place EPA's PSAs in newsletters or communication efforts you share with your employees. PSAs can be found at http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/partnerships/plugin/members/index.htm;

or

(3) Place EPA's web sticker (see below) at the appropriate place of your web site to announce this special week and link it to www.epa.gov/cellphones

EPA would be delighted if you would join us in collecting or getting the word out about cell phone recycling. If you wish to set up a collection event for that week, I would be happy to connect you with one of our Plug-In to eCycling partners for help organizing a collection event. I am also available to help you with draft a message about cell phone recycling and how recycling helps the environment. As with last year's effort, this campaign is targeted for personal cell phones and PDAs - not Federal government property.

For more information on how to and why you should recycle your cell phone please go to www.epa.gov/cellphones. Please feel free to give me a call at (703) 308-3948, or by e-mail at pollard.karen@epa.gov.if you have any questions.

Karen Pollard EPA, Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery 703-308-3948

Did you know?

In 2007, only 10% of the unwanted cell phones were recycled - most ended up being thrown away, stored, or otherwise forgotten.

Cell phones are made from valuable resources such as precious metals, copper, plastics, and glass - all of which require energy to mine and manufacture. If the100 million cell phones that were ready for end of life management is 2006 were recycled - the energy savings alone would be staggering - enough to power more than 19,500 U.S. households with electricity for one year.

EPA's Plug-In to Recycling partners are AT&T, Best Buy, LG Electronics, Motorola, Nokia, Office Depot, Samsung, Sony Ericsson, Sprint, Staples, T-Mobile and Verizon Wireless. They all have nationwide cell phone recycling programs that accepts any make or model of cell phone, PDA and accessories. Each program is different - some have in-store collections, some collect through the mail by pre-paid envelopes or labels. Go to www.epa.gov/cellphones to find out where you or your co-workers can recycle your mobile device.

Our partners have committed to requiring that any data be cleared or destroyed from the memory of any electronics material that is reused. It is prudent however, to ask those who donate unwanted cell phones/PDAs to clear their own data. They can do this easily by: removing the SIM card and following instructions from the wireless carrier or the product manual on how to conduct a factory hard reset; or by using data erasing tools that are available on the Web. One tool can be found at www.wirelessrecycling.com, look for phone data eraser.

All of EPA's Plug-In To eCycling partners have committed in their partnership agreements to ensure that the refurbishers and recyclers they use will meet or exceed EPA's Plug-In To eCycling Material Management Guide and they take steps to meet the Responsible Recycling (R2) Practices (www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/materials/ecycling/r2practices.htm).

There is a social component to cell phone recycling. Equipment in good working condition is sometimes donated to a number of worthy charities, or provide them for 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.

PSAs can be found at

http://www.epa.gov/epawaste/partnerships/plugin/members/index.htm.