

PURPOSE

This resource briefly outlines different options available to federal agencies for reuse of federally-owned electronic equipment. For information on reusing non-federal equipment, please see the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's eCycling Web site: <http://www.epa.gov/ecycling/>.

INTRODUCTION

Not all used electronics are obsolete. Many used electronics may be of value to different users in your organization, other users in the federal government, or eligible federal donation recipients.

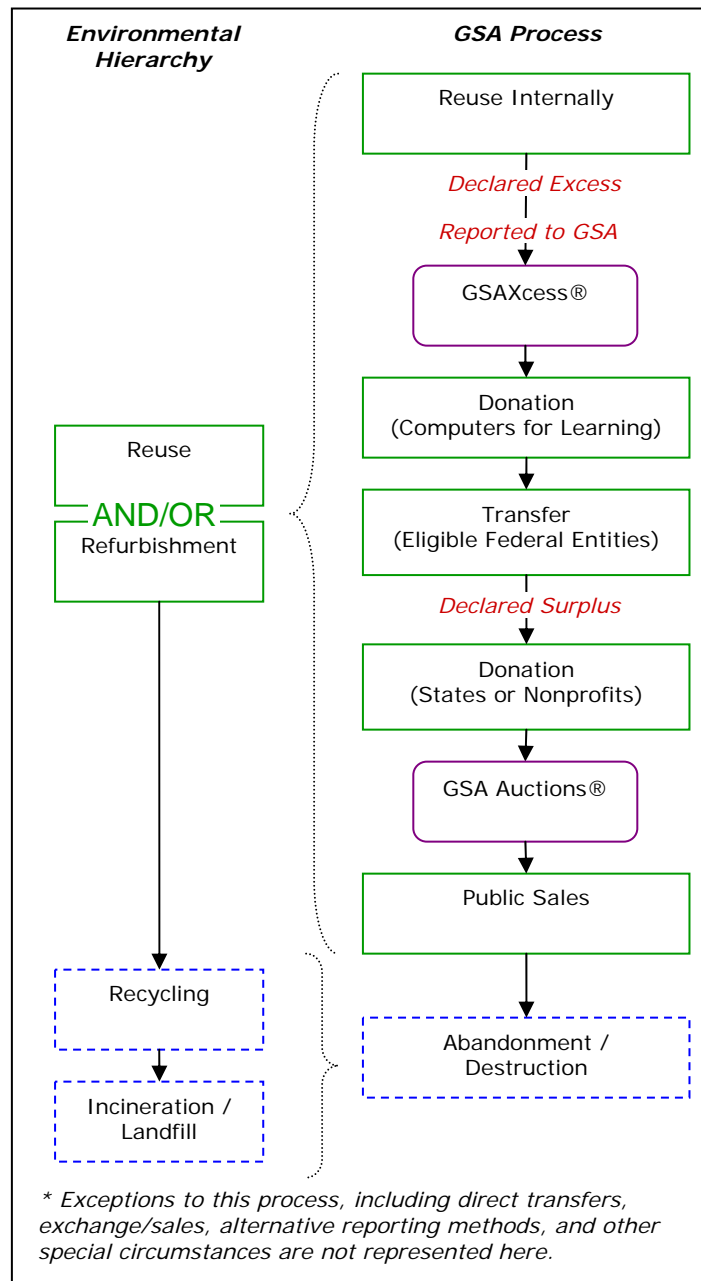
The following environmental hierarchy – from most to least preferred - should be followed for managing end-of-life electronics:

- Reuse
- Refurbishment¹
- Recycling
- Incineration or Landfilling

This “environmental” hierarchy captures the specific end-of-life processes required by federal regulation and facilitated by the General Services Administration (GSA) (see box on right).

Federal agencies and facilities should also be aware of, and adhere to, relevant federal, state and local laws related to electronics reuse, recycling, and disposal.

Federal agencies and facilities must coordinate with their property management personnel prior to conducting any activity pertaining to the reusing or recycling of electronic equipment.



¹ Refurbishment is the repair and/or upgrade of electronic equipment to make it usable (if it is broken) or more valuable (if it is obsolete).

Other Federal Electronics Challenge (FEC) resources address the GSA personal property disposal process and electronics recycling options.

Why Reuse?

Federal Management Regulation (FMR) Subchapter B - Personal Property, 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 102, mandates reuse of personal property, to the extent practicable.

Executive Order (E.O.) 13423, *Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy and Transportation Management*, and the Implementing Instructions, require agencies to:

- Strive to extend the useful lifetime of electronic equipment to four or more years.
- Implement procedures to ensure timely reuse and donation of equipment.
- Comply with GSA procedures for the transfer, donation, sale and recycling of electronic equipment.
- Comply with GSA's Computers for Learning program and Executive Order 12999, *Educational Technology: Ensuring Opportunity for All Children in the Next Century*.

INTERNAL REUSE, REFURBISHMENT AND REDEPLOYMENT

Federal agencies and facilities are encouraged to consider internal reuse and redeployment of electronics after the end of their first life, in order to extend the useful lifetime of their electronic equipment. The "first life" of a piece of electronic equipment is the period of time that piece of equipment is useful to its first user.

Tips for Internal Reuse, Refurbishment and Redeployment

Keep an accurate inventory record of your electronic assets: An accurate record of electronics assets can provide insight into your organization's current stock of electronic equipment. A wide variety of inventorying software programs are available off-the-shelf that can be used for this purpose. These programs may provide information on equipment age, installed hardware and software, and location. All of this information can help your organization maximize the use of your existing equipment so you can make informed decisions about necessary upgrades, refurbishment, redeployments, and new purchases.

Extend the life of your equipment: Please see the FEC presentation, *Meeting the Four Year Goal: Extending the Life of Electronic Equipment*, available at: http://www.federalelectronicschallenge.net/resources/docs/meeting_four_year_goal.pdf, which includes information on how to extend the life of electronic equipment already in use at your facility.

Consider implementing a bumping system when replacing electronics: Ensure all electronic equipment has been reused and not prematurely discarded by initiating a “bumping” system when new equipment is purchased and distributed. A bumping system allows you to rotate equipment to staff with different electronics needs. For example, a new 3.00 gigahertz (GHz) computer may bump an older model 2.00 GHz computer to a desktop where a 733 megahertz (MHz) computer is currently being used.

Use agency or facility excess property inventories to find needed equipment: Many federal agencies and facilities maintain listings of available excess property before it leaves their agency to the GSA or the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service (DRMS). Before purchasing new electronic equipment, check your organization’s listing or speak to your organization’s property management personnel about opportunities to reuse electronic equipment internally.

REUSE PROCESS FOR CIVILIAN FACILITIES

If internal reuse/redeployment is not an option, civilian agencies and facilities are required to follow the GSA process to ensure appropriate reuse of excess or surplus electronic equipment:

- Donation through Computers for Learning
- Transfer to other Federal entities
- Donation to eligible States or nonprofits

Civilian agencies and facilities may also use manufacturer take-back services for electronics reuse and refurbishment, through exchange/sales or abandonment and destruction.

This resource provides a brief overview of these donation options, for a complete overview of the GSA disposition process please see FEC’s resource, *Overview of GSA Personal Property Disposal Process*, available at:
http://www.federalelectronicschallenge.net/resources/docs/gsa_eolfact.pdf.

For information on how to prepare electronic equipment for donation or transfer, please see FEC’s resource, *Preparing to Transfer or Donate Used Electronic Equipment*, available at:
<http://www.federalelectronicschallenge.net/resources/docs/donation.pdf>.

For information on properly packaging used electronic equipment, please see FEC’s resource, *Packaging Used Electronics for Transportation*, available at:
<http://www.federalelectronicschallenge.net/resources/docs/fecpack.pdf>.

Reuse activities are handled through the DRMS for Department of Defense (DoD) organizations. Please see REUSE PROCESS FOR DEFENSE FACILITIES, below.

Donation Through Computers for Learning

The Computers for Learning (CFL) program allows transfer of excess federal computer equipment to schools and educational nonprofit organizations, giving special consideration to those with the greatest need. The CFL program implements E.O. 12999, *Educational*



Reuse of Electronic Equipment

Updated: 08/06/2008

Technology: Ensuring Opportunity for All Children in the Next Century. E.O. 12999 directs federal agencies to give “highest preference to schools and nonprofit organizations in the transfer of educationally useful federal equipment.” The authority for transfers under CFL is the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980, as amended (15 U.S.C. 3710(i)). This act authorizes federal agencies to transfer excess education-related federal equipment to educational institutions or nonprofit organizations for educational and research activities.

Whether reported electronically or on hardcopy, excess property reported to GSA is entered into GSAXcess®. Excess electronics entered into GSAXcess® may be offered to eligible schools and educational nonprofits through the CFL program. Registered schools and educational nonprofits select the computer equipment they need through the CFL Web site, which pulls data on available equipment from GSAXcess®. Holding agencies or facilities are notified that a CFL recipient has requested the equipment and allocate their equipment to recipients based on need. Transportation arrangements are made between the federal agency or facility and the recipient. It is the responsibility of the recipient to pickup the equipment or pay for its shipment in a timely manner.

Federal agencies and facilities may also opt to directly transfer electronic equipment to eligible schools and educational nonprofits, and report these transfers through CFL's Post Transaction Module. Certain restrictions and reporting requirements apply to direct transfers. See GSA's *Personal Property Disposal Guide* for more information.

When a federal agency transfers computer equipment to a school or educational nonprofit activity under 15 U.S.C., the holding federal agency releases its ownership of the equipment and the recipient gains ownership of the property upon receipt.

Transfer to Other Federal Entities

If your excess electronics entered into GSAXcess® are not transferred under the CFL program, they are offered to eligible federal entities for reuse. Federal agencies, to the maximum extent practicable, must fill requirements for personal property by using existing agency property or by obtaining excess property from other federal agencies in lieu of new procurements.

Federal entities use GSAXcess® to locate and request excess personal property. Requests for excess property are generally honored on a “first-come, first-served basis.” GSA Area Property Officers (APOs) make the final allocation determination.

Federal agencies may also opt to directly transfer electronic equipment to eligible federal entities. Certain restrictions and reporting requirements apply to direct transfers. See GSA's *Personal Property Disposal Guide* for more information.

Transfers between federal agencies are normally made without charge for the property itself except in the cases meeting the requirements for reimbursable transfers. The requesting agency is responsible for shipping and transportation costs.

Donation to Eligible States or Nonprofits

If your used electronics are not transferred under the CFL program and can not be reused by another federal entity, they are considered surplus personal property. Generally, surplus personal property is offered through the State Agencies for Surplus Property (SASPs) for further distribution. Surplus electronics may be donated to state and local governments and eligible nonprofit organizations through the SASPs.

The SASPs determine eligibility for participation in the donation program and assist eligible recipients in locating, screening, and acquiring needed equipment. The GSA Allocating Official (AO) makes the final allocation determination.

When a federal agency donates electronic equipment through a SASP, title to the equipment is vested with the United States Government until a one-year period of restriction is met. During the period of restriction, the recipient has conditional title to the equipment that allows them to take the electronic equipment into its custody and use it. After the period of restriction is met, the recipient gains title to the equipment.

Manufacturer Take-Back Services for Electronics Reuse and Refurbishment

Federal agencies and facilities may use manufacturer take-back services through one of two methods: exchange/sales or abandonment/destruction.

- *Exchange/Sales:* When replacing personal property with similar items, the value of the old items may be used to reduce the cost of the replacement item either by exchange (trade-in) or sale with a manufacturer or vendor.
- *Abandonment/Destruction:* If the manufacturer is willing to take-back obsolete and/or broken equipment, federal agencies may declare the property for abandonment and destruction and use manufacturer take-back services.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Electronics taken-back by a manufacturer may not necessarily be reused, refurbished, recycled or disposed of in an environmentally sound manner. Federal agencies and facilities must exercise due diligence when returning used electronics to manufacturers.

TAKE-BACK OF EPEAT-REGISTERED PRODUCTS: If a federal agency or facility is using a manufacturer's take-back service that is provided because the product is registered with the Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT), there is no need for further due diligence. Take-back programs for EPEAT-registered equipment are required to meet EPA's *Guidelines for Materials Management* for Plug-In To eCycling partners, facilitating the environmentally sound management required by E.O. 13423.

Certain restrictions and reporting requirements apply to exchange/sales and abandonment/destruction declarations. See GSA's *Personal Property Disposal Guide* for more information.

REUSE PROCESS FOR DEFENSE FACILITIES

The Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service (DRMS) manages all electronic equipment end-of-life activities for Department of Defense (DoD). DoD property is handled according to the same priorities as civilian agency property described above: reutilization within DoD, transfer to eligible education recipients through the DRMS application of the CFL program, transfer to other federal agencies, donations to qualified state and nonprofit organizations, and sale to the public including recyclers.

DoD-owned electronic equipment, when excess to your organization's needs, must be reported as excess to DRMS. DRMS handles the disposal of all excess property received from the military services.

REFERENCES

The Federal Management Regulations, 41 CFR 102, are available online from the U.S. Government Printing Office, at: <http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/>.

The National Electronics Recycling Infrastructure Clearinghouse provides a list of electronics recycling laws in effect at their Web site:
<http://www.ecyclingresource.org/ContentPage.aspx?Pageid=28&ParentID=0>.

The text of Executive Order 13423 and the Implementing Instructions are available at:
http://ofee.gov/eo/eo13423_main.asp.

Additional information regarding Computers for Learning is available online at:
<http://computersforlearning.gov/>.

The text of Executive Order 12999 is available online at:
http://computersforlearning.gov/htm/hp_eo12999.htm.

Information about GSA's guidelines and services for personal property disposal can be found at: <http://www.gsa.gov/property>.

Information about GSAXcess® is available online at: <http://gsaccess.gov/>.

A list of State Agencies for Surplus Property, with contact information, is available online from the GSA at: <http://www.gsa.gov/sasp/>.

Information about the Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT), and the product criteria related to manufacturer take-back services, are available on the EPEAT Web site: <http://www.epeat.net/>.

Additional information about DRMS is available online at the DRMS web site:
<https://www.drms.dla.mil/>.

Additional information about the DRMS's Computers for Learning program is available online at the DRMS CFL web site: https://www.drms.dla.mil/cfl_online/.



Reuse of Electronic Equipment

Updated: 08/06/2008

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions related to this resource or need other assistance with the Federal Electronics Challenge, please contact your Regional Champion. The list of FEC Regional Champions is available at <http://www.federalectronicchallenge.net/champions.htm>.

Partners may also request technical assistance by sending an email to partner@electronicschallenge.net.

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