

PURPOSE

This resource briefly outlines different options available to federal organizations for reuse of federally-owned electronic equipment. For information on reusing non-federal equipment, please see the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's eCycling website: <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).

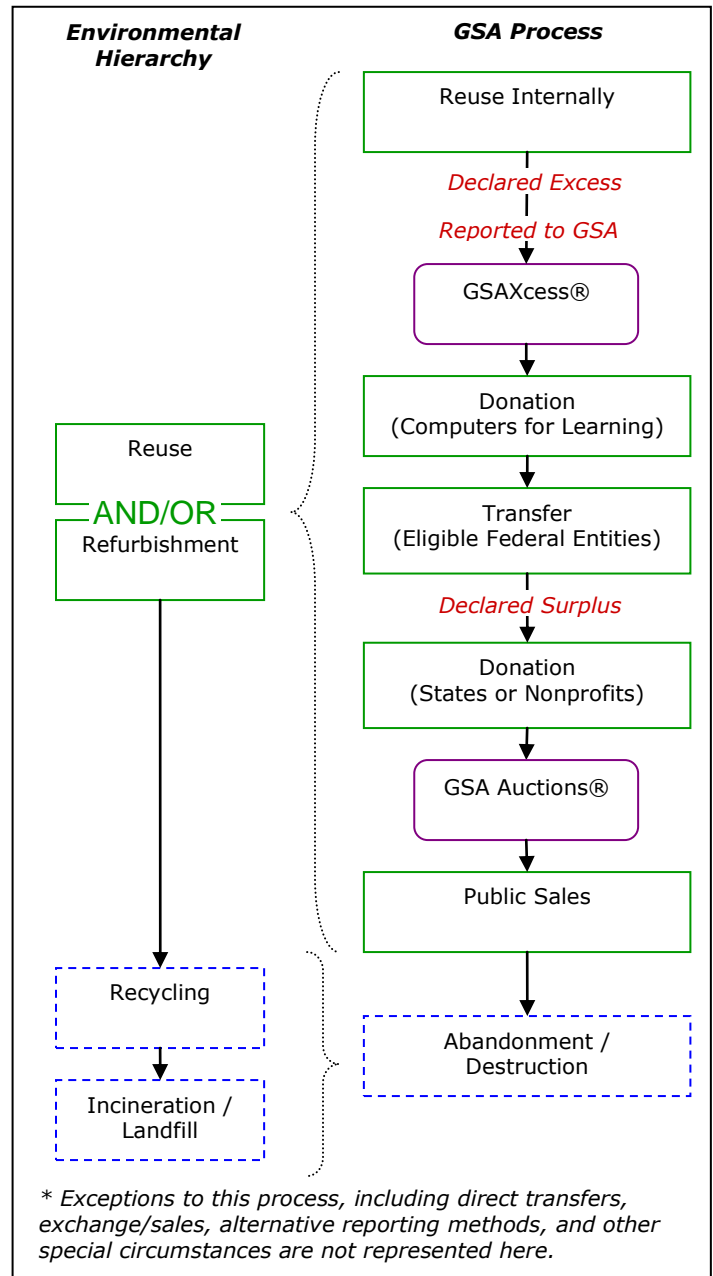
Federal agencies and facilities should also be aware of, and adhere to, relevant federal, state and local laws related to electronics reuse, recycling, and disposal.

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.

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

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.



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is the repair and/or upgrade of electronic equipment to make it usable (if it is broken) or more valuable (if it is obsolete).

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 off-the-shelf inventorying software programs are available 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: The FEC resource, *Extending the Life of Electronic Equipment*, available at: <http://www.epa.gov/fec/resources/extend.pdf>, includes detailed information on how to extend the life of electronic equipment already in use at your facility.

Consider implementing a tiered system when replacing electronics: Ensure all electronic equipment has been reused and not prematurely discarded by initiating a tiered system when new equipment is purchased and distributed. A tiered system allows you to rotate equipment to staff with different electronics needs. For example, a new quad processor computer may bump an older model dual processor computer to a desktop where a single processor 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 Logistics Agency (DLA). 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
- Public Sales

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 the FEC resource, *Overview of GSA Personal Property Disposal Process for Federal Electronics*, available at: http://www.epa.gov/fec/resources/gsa_eolfact.pdf.

For information on how to prepare electronic equipment for donation or transfer, please see the FEC resource, *Preparing to Transfer or Donate Used Federal Electronic Equipment*, available at: <http://www.epa.gov/fec/resources/donation.pdf>.

For information on properly packaging used electronic equipment, please see the FEC resource, *Packaging Used Electronics for Transportation*, available at: <http://www.epa.gov/fec/resources/fecpack.pdf>.

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.

General Services Administration (GSA) FMR Bulletin B-34 strongly encourages reuse and donation of equipment that is new, used and working, or easily repairable.

Executive Order (E.O.) 13514, *Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance*, requires agencies to employ environmentally sound practices with respect to the agency's disposition of all agency excess or surplus electronic products.

Reuse activities are handled through the DLA 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 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 website, 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*, available at: http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/fas/5-06-00389_R2-yWC-w_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.pdf, 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 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 specific time 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.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Be sure to notify recipients of their disposition options when their donated electronics become obsolete. Provide CFL recipients and other donees with FEC's *Fact Sheet for Recipients of Donated Federal Electronic Equipment*: http://www.epa.gov/fec/resources/recpnt_factsheet.pdf.

GSA FMR Bulletin B-34 provides language that should be included in any documentation transferring ownership or custody of electronic equipment, and in any listing or advertisement of electronic equipment planned for disposal under any reuse option. This language is included in the fact sheet referenced above.

Public Sales

Surplus electronics that are not donated may be offered to the public for sale. Property sales give individuals and businesses an opportunity to buy items the federal government no longer needs.

Federal agencies may sell personal property as the holding agency or on behalf of another agency when so requested, or have GSA or a contractor conduct the sale.

GSA Auctions® is a web-enabled auction site that allows all registered participants to bid electronically on surplus personal property. There are other options for public sales outlined in *GSA's Personal Property Disposal Guide*.

Purchasers are required to remove their purchases within the time prescribed for each sale, although equipment cannot be removed before payment is made.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Electronics sold to the public, including electronics sold to electronics recyclers, may not necessarily be disposed of in an environmentally sound manner. E.O. 13514 requires all federal agencies to use environmentally sound practices with respect to disposition of agency electronic equipment.

Under GSA FMR Bulletin B-34, federal organizations are strongly encouraged to only sell equipment with condition codes 1, 4 and 7 (repairable). Equipment with condition code 7 should only be sold if any needed repairs minimally impact equipment performance or repairs can reasonably be performed by a non-technical buyer. If your organization decides that electronic equipment in condition code 7 may be sold (rather than abandoned or destroyed), such equipment should be sold only as individual assets or as individual workstations to facilitate bidder inspection in the interest of encouraging continued use of the equipment after the sale.

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.

Under GSA FMR Bulletin B-34, federal organizations are strongly encouraged to only return electronic equipment to a manufacturer or vendor under a take-back program that uses a third-party certified recycler (e.g., certified under the Responsible Recycling (R2) Practices for Use in Accredited Certification Programs for Electronics Recyclers, or the e-Stewards Standard for Responsible Recycling and Reuse of Electronic Equipment®).

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 DLA manages all electronic equipment end-of-life activities for 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 DLA 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 DLA. DLA handles the disposal of all excess property received from the military services.

REFERENCES

The Federal Management Regulation, 41 CFR 102, is available at: <http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/>.

The National Center for Electronics Recycling provides a list of state electronics recycling laws in effect at their website: <http://www.electronicrecycling.org/public/ContentPage.aspx?pageid=14>.

The text of Executive Order 13514 is available at: <http://www.fedcenter.gov/programs/eo13514/>.

Information regarding Computers for Learning is available at: <http://computersforlearning.gov/>.

The text of Executive Order 12999 is available at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/100841>.

Information about GSA's guidelines and services for personal property disposal can be found at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21045>.

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

A list of State Agencies for Surplus Property, with contact information, is available at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/100851>.

Information about DLA is available at: <https://www.dla.mil/>.



Reuse of Federal Electronic Equipment

Updated: 6/28/2012

Information about the DLA's Computers for Learning program is available at:
<https://www.dispositionservices.dla.mil/rtd03/cfl/index.shtml>.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions related to this resource or need other assistance with the Federal Electronics Challenge, please contact your Regional Champion: <http://www.epa.gov/fec/technical.html>.

Visit the FEC online: <http://www.epa.gov/fec/>

E-mail the FEC: fec@epa.gov