

# e-Waste Recycling Event--Frequently Asked Questions

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**Q: What is e-Waste?**

**A:** [e-Waste](#) is a popular informal term for consumer and business electronic equipment that has reached the end of its useful life. Electronic waste is the fastest-growing type of waste worldwide and frequently contains hazardous materials like lead and mercury, which can adversely affect the environment and human health. The EPA reported that in 2009 only 25% of electronics at that time were ready for end of life management were recycled.

**Q: What happens to my equipment?**

**A:** All equipment is destroyed and recycled in an environmentally sound manner by a fully licensed recycling facility in North America. Equipment is manually and mechanically disassembled; shredded into small pieces of metals, plastics, and glass; and separated into reusable commodity streams used to manufacture new materials. The facility is also Responsible Recycling Practices (R2) certified. Responsible Recycling Practices (R2) is recognized by the [EPA](#) as a third-party certification for electronics recyclers to ensure the proper disposal of used electronics.

**Q: Is my equipment shipped overseas for recycling?**

**A:** No. All equipment is processed in North America by a fully licensed recycling facility (in full compliance with all local, state, and federal guidelines/regulations/laws pertaining to the proper and environmentally sound recycling of electronics equipment).

**Q: I am concerned about my data. Is it safe?**

**A:** Yes. All storage devices are completely destroyed by means of mechanical shredding. No one is permitted to remove equipment from the site once it has been removed from your car. It will be placed into semi-trailers that are secured until the equipment is delivered to the recycling facility. We strongly recommend that you backup and erase all existing data on any equipment; once equipment has been collected at the event, it will be destroyed and cannot be returned.

**Q: Is there a limit to the amount of equipment I bring?**

**A:** No

**Q: I'm going to be out of town during the event dates. Can I drop off my electronics some other time?**

**A:** If you are not able to attend, you may be able to enlist a neighbor or friend to drop off your equipment when they attend.

**Q: I am not an Ann Arbor resident. Can I still participate?**

**A:** Yes! Choose the date that will work best for you. The event is open to the general public. We encourage you to spread the word to your community.

**Q: Can I bring U-M equipment to these events?**

**A:** No. All U-M-owned equipment must be disposed of through Property Disposition. If Property Disposition cannot resell an item, they will recycle it through U-M Occupational Safety & Environmental Health in accordance with state and federal regulations.

**Q: My equipment still works and I would like to donate it. How do I find a nonprofit that wants my item?**

**A:** The EPA encourages [re-use](#) as the environmentally preferable alternative. By donating your used electronics, you allow schools, nonprofit organizations, and lower-income families to obtain electronics that they otherwise could not afford.

Before donating your used electronics, make sure that you:

- Copy and transfer needed files or information
- Clear all data off of your hard drive before recycling by following [Safe Computing's guide to removing data from a hard drive](#). You might also find these sites, complete with video and images, helpful:
- Check with the receiving organization to make sure that they will accept your donation. Some organizations have repair capabilities, whereas others will only accept items that are fully functioning.

Check with your favorite charity directly or consult one of these helpful websites:

[Washtenaw resources](#)

[EPA resources](#)

[Ann Arbor resources](#)