



## **7 Ways to Be More Efficient With E-waste Disposal**

By Surplus Service

### **Reuse Old Electronics—It's Good for the Environment and Business**

Reuse is the simplest and most cost-efficient way to dispose of e-waste because it helps the environment. At Surplus Service, [we have created a business model that allows us to “upcycle” electronic equipment](#) until the end of their lifecycle. Recycling can still be used for surplus electronics, but it should only be used at a truly end-of-life point.

By diverting used electronics to the secondary market where they can still be used, businesses and organizations can dramatically improve their bottom line and e-recyclers can dramatically elongate the life of a piece of electronic equipment.

### **Use Zero Waste Reporting to Show How Your E-waste Disposal Efforts are Reducing Your Carbon Footprint**

Since many Facility, EH&S and IT managers are measured by how much waste they reduce, reusing electronics also enables managers to highlight their Zero Waste and sustainability efforts to their organizations, partners, clients and regulators. Zero waste (or sustainability) reporting is what allows companies to report their environmental and economic impacts on society as a result of their operations. In addition, sustainability reports provide a means for companies to outline their annual goals as well as what values they uphold to practice an ethical business model.

With an increase in government guidelines requiring companies to utilize eco-friendly options when disposing of old electronics, sustainability reports offer an effective way for companies to monitor their carbon footprint and promote their stewardship.

### **Make Sure Your Data is Long Gone Before Disposing of Your Old Electronics**

There are multiple ways to ensure that secure information is handled with care, data wiping and data shredding. With data wiping, the information on the hard drive is

removed for good and can't be recovered. Data shredding destroys the hard drive in a few different ways. This method shreds up a hard drive like a paper shredder, and your device gets sorted into raw commodities, such as plastics and metals.

For those IT and facilities managers who want to ensure a higher degree of data eradication, get a Certificate of Data Destruction. This certificate verifies the electronic device and any information it contained was destroyed, and it serves as an added peace-of-mind for any company or organization concerned with reaching their zero waste goals.

### **Figure Out the Difference Between What Counts as Waste vs. Recycling**

You have two ways to determine this, according to the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. If the electronics are not reusable, then they must be recycled. If the electronics are broken, obsolete or have no value, then they aren't considered trash and can be recycled.

See a pattern here? If the electronic equipment includes metals, plastic or glass, chances are there is an e-waste solution.

### **Know Whether You're Dealing with Electronic Devices such as Circuit Boards or Electronic Equipment such as Toasters and Coffee Makers**

Gadgets such as circuit boards are manufactured in a very complicated way, so a special process has to be used to extract the precious metals and other toxic e-waste from the devices. [According to the EPA](#), these types of electronics often contain small amounts of plastic, which can be turned into artwork, artificial wood and construction materials.

### **Keep in Mind Where to Send Your E-waste**

Fortunately, in California, there are a number of electronic recycling companies. The trusted ones are [listed on the CalRecycle website](#), including companies such as Surplus Service. The beauty of working with one of these companies is that you can arrange to have your e-waste picked up, often for free.

### **Make Sure Your Company is Dealing with a Collector that Knows How to Handle Surplus Electronics Properly**

It's always best to look for a collector that takes a holistic closed loop approach to repairing and reusing electronic equipment. An e-waste recycling company that knows what they're doing will also maintain records that track outgoing shipments of e-waste. Since we started using the closed loop method, we've been able to reuse about 85% of the surplus equipment from our clients. Only 15% of the e-waste gets recycled while close to 0% of our e-waste ends up in landfills or illegally exported to a foreign country. We have reused millions of untold pounds of electronics, saving them from being recycling and taken to landfills.