There is an urgent and growing need to increase awareness and expand recycling efforts in the area of electronics. In the U.S., more than 80 percent of electronics that are no longer in use are currently stockpiled in homes and businesses. That’s a problem for two important reasons, the first being data security. Any electronic device containing memory can provide identity thieves access to sensitive personal data. By properly recycling electronics with a certified recycler who will ensure proper data destruction, you can prevent unused devices from falling into the wrong hands.

The second reason is that the rapidly increasing global demand for electronics - and the speed at which electronic devices become obsolete and are replaced - is not sustainable. The rare and precious metals necessary to manufacture new electronic devices are in great demand, but unfortunately, in limited supply. The good news is that valuable resources inside of electronic devices are able to be recovered and reused through recycling programs.

Recycled electronics contain metal deposits 40 to 50 times richer than deposits found in mined ore. Not only that, the environmental footprint of recovering metals from recycled materials is far less than that of mining for virgin metals. Be part of the solution by educating your community and hosting an electronics recycling event as part of America Recycles Day, November 15, 2019. Below you’ll find a step by step guide to help make your electronics recycling event a success.

For any questions about hosting a recycling event, feel free to email AmericaRecyclesDay@kab.org.
The key to a successful event is in the planning. Some organizations host extremely successful collection drives while others are surprised by unanticipated costs and logistical challenges. This guide will help you as you prepare for your electronics recycling event.

1. Plan your event with a certified recycling partner.
   Not all recyclers are created equal. It is important to partner with a certified recycler to ensure that the electronic devices you collect do not end up in landfills or illegally shipped overseas. Certified recyclers also help to protect personal data from ending up in the hands of identity thieves. Certified recyclers undergo rigorous third party inspections to ensure that they are managing materials and data in conformance to the highest industry standards. To search for a certified recycler in your area, visit [www.SustainableElectronics.org](http://www.SustainableElectronics.org) and click on the green FIND A RECYCLER button.

2. Choose time, location and develop a site map.
   Choose the event date(s) and time that will allow for optimal participation. When selecting location, it is best to choose a site that will allow for one-way traffic flow and curbside drop-off. Avoid potential back-ups by ensuring there is sufficient space for multiple cars to unload at the same time. Create a site map that identifies traffic flow, sign placement, drop-off points, staging areas, etc. Create a contingency plan for inclement or severe weather.

3. Maximize collection by opening your event to neighboring communities or organizations.
   Expand the reach of your recycling event by opening it to others. This makes good environmental sense and also takes advantage of economies of scale related to transporting the collected items to the recycling facility.

4. Cover your bases - rules, regulations and notifications.
   States, counties and municipalities may have specific rules or regulations governing electronic recycling events. Check with your state and local government agencies to see what rules, if any, apply to you. Consult with other departments such as facilities, public safety and risk management as you plan. For off-site events, it is advisable to get written permission from the property owner or manager. Share event date and time with local police, sheriff and fire departments so they are alerted to the possibility of increased traffic flow.
Discuss financial obligations with your recycling partner.
Some collection events are revenue opportunities, while others may incur some cost. Determining factors can be the amount and types of electronics collected, the cost to transport electronics for processing, and the actual cost of processing. Older TVs and monitors, for example, cost more to recycle than newer cell phones and laptops. Some recyclers may require a small fee to recycle those types of items. Many event organizers choose to pass this cost on by charging individuals a small fee at the time of drop off. A written agreement or contract is always a good idea. Have your recycling partner put in writing what costs (if any) you may incur, and what revenue opportunities (if any) you can expect.

Develop a logistics plan with your recycling partner, and identify areas of responsibility.
Devise an event day logistics plan. Determine what specific tasks must be accomplished leading up to and including the day of your event. Determine how many workers/volunteers will be needed, and who will supply them. Determine who will direct traffic, collect fees, and train & direct volunteers. Determine security procedures and materials handling procedures, etc. Determine who will supply signs, traffic cones, carts, forklifts, pallets, packing materials, storage containers, trucks, etc. Determine who is responsible for sorting, securing, loading and transporting collected items.

Secure and train volunteers.
Recruit volunteers - it is better to have too many volunteers than not enough. Avoid long lines by assigning curbside volunteers with carts or flatbeds to assist with unloading. Plan on having “floater” volunteers to assist with breaks and to fill in where needed. Consider having volunteers sign liability waiver forms. Prior to the event, send volunteers an email with time requirements, job duties, safety notes, site map and list of any items that they should bring. If your budget allows, coffee and donuts or pizza lunches are a great way to make your volunteers want to come back next time!

Protect yourself from liability.
Talk with your insurance agent and the site manager to determine what special event coverage may be needed. Talk to your recycling partner about the best procedures for ensuring data security during your event. Train staff and volunteers on proper security procedures to protect against data theft. Instruct workers that all electronics collected must be surrendered to the recycler and may not be claimed for personal use. Request a copy of your electronics recycler’s certificate of insurance with your county or municipality listed as additional insured. Coverage should include operations, products, interdependent contractors, property, contractual and personal injury, automobile, and umbrella at appropriate levels. This covers you for possible accidents during the event or during transport of the equipment. As an added protection against liability, some event organizers require a signed release form from anyone dropping off electronic devices containing memory.
Market your event using multiple venues.

Say it, then say it again using multiple venues. Newspaper advertising (online and print) works well if you have the budget. Press releases, online community calendars and social media are good free avenues of exposure. On all outreach materials, be sure to list items that will be accepted for recycling, examples of items that will not be accepted, and any fees you plan on collecting. Be sure to reach out to not only local residents, but also local businesses that might have a stockpile of old electronics they’re not sure what to do with. Start advertising 3-4 weeks ahead, and send out final reminders 1-2 days before the event. Free educational and marketing materials can be downloaded from [www.SustainableElectronics.org](http://www.SustainableElectronics.org) by selecting “Outreach Materials” from the R2 CERTIFICATION menu tab.

Make it a smooth running event day.

Arrive at least an hour and a half early depending on the scale of your event and ask that volunteers be there 1/2 hour before the event begins. Post traffic signs and clearly mark drop-off locations, collection areas and other stations identified on your site map. Using the logistics plan you created, assign and train volunteers for their respective posts. Be sure all tools and supplies are distributed to the proper stations. If you plan on collecting any recycling fees, be sure you have a plan for collecting money and making change. Stock a “command center” with water, snacks, work gloves and a basic first aid kit. If your recycling partner will not be on-site during your event, be sure to have their phone number readily available in case of an emergency.

Post-event.

Record what worked well and what you could do to improve your next event. Request a tonnage report from your recycler. Data helps with future planning as well as gives you something to tout. Publicize your success! Do a press release saying how many pounds you kept out of the landfill and how many residents were served. If you have suggestions for improving this guide, please send them to Patty@SustainableElectronics.org.

(Sample Volunteer Waiver Form, Service Agreement, and Severe Weather Plan are attached for your convenience.)