



Waste Wise e-News

A Tool for Environmental Sustainability Resources and Networking

GREEN ELECTRONICS

The world we live in is techno-centric with electronic equipment essential to our day-to-day communications and business survival. But with this reliance comes rapidly changing technology, which results in constant production of new electronics, a challenge with disposal of “outdated” items and the ongoing energy usage of these items.

Impact of Electronics

The environmental impacts of electronics exist throughout their lifecycle, depending on the item and how it is used. Energy usage, particularly in data centers where there is ample room to improve energy efficiency, is a large contributor. In addition, much of the impact resides with the manufacturing process; the energy used to make a desktop computer may be as much as four times the amount of energy used throughout the lifetime. In addition, upgrading an existing computer rather than buying a new one could save up to 20 times the energy since an estimated 80 percent of the overall usage is in the manufacturing process. (Illinois DCEO E-Waste Fact Sheet). At the end of life, it is equally important to recycle electronics rather than burning them or putting them in landfills. Electronics contain valuable metals that can easily be recovered, and they also contain toxic materials that need to be managed properly. Product stewardship, discussed below, is one way to facilitate the responsible handling of electronics throughout their lifecycles.

Product Stewardship

Product stewardship means that “all who make, distribute, use and dispose of products share responsibility for reducing the environmental impact of those products” (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency). In the case of electronics, the case for product stewardship is supported by the rapid changes in technology resulting in the rapid turnover of “old” items in favor of newer technologies. A product stewardship model for electronics will address safe and efficient manufacturing of new technologies, will help to create and support recycling opportunities for electronics components, will facilitate the recovery of both hazardous and valuable materials for production into new electronic items, and will encourage reuse before disposal whenever possible.

RESOURCES

[DCEO Fact Sheet](#)

Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

[Product Stewardship – Electronics](#)

U.S. EPA

[Product Stewardship in Minnesota](#)

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

IN THE NEWS

“Businesses Join Green Movement”

MNDaily.com, November 29, 2009

www.mndaily.com/2009/11/29/businesses-join-green-movement

“Going Green for a Low-Impact Holiday”

KARE11.com, December 1, 2009

www.kare11.com/news/earthkare/earthkare_article.aspx?storyid=829488&catid=309

EVENTS

Webinar: Saving Energy is Smart Business

Hosted by Energy Smart

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2009

Noon - 1:00 p.m.

COST: FREE

A difficult economy has been challenging for many businesses. However, many companies are using this time to prepare for a strong recovery. Taking small steps now to become more energy efficient will help your business gain a competitive edge in the future. Jill Curran and Jennifer Henry of the Energy Smart program will present energy cost savings strategies, financial incentives for energy efficiency, and business success stories.



Grow Minnesota’s Get Ready to Grow Series: “Cultivating Your Next Opportunity”

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, 2010

7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

SUMMIT BREWING CO.

ST. PAUL

For more information, visit www.mnchamber.com or contact Lisa Engdahl at (651) 292-4699.

Minnesota Waste Wise 2010 Workshop Series: Green Electronics

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2010

8:45 a.m. - Noon

400 NORTH ROBERT STREET, SUITE 1500

ST. PAUL

For more information or to register, visit www.mnwastewise.org.

RECYCLE YOUR HOLIDAY LIGHTS

This new program offers a recycling opportunity, along with FREE pick up for used holiday lights and cords, in several communities.

[Click here](#) to visit the Recycle Association of Minnesota website for more information.

NEW MEMBER UPDATE

Murphy Warehouse, Minneapolis

Base Management/Kandiyohi, Minneapolis

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Not a member but would like to join? Are you a current member wanting to take full advantage of your member benefits? Contact Kate Worley at (651) 292-4662 or kworley@mnchamber.com.

Disclosure: Waste Wise e-News is a tool to inform our members of current events or waste issues. The content of Waste Wise e-News is for educational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Minnesota Waste Wise does not endorse any of the following waste services, organizations or events. Any such portrayal is unintentional by Minnesota Waste Wise.