



## EPA and GSA visit an “urban mine” to highlight growing Colorado jobs sector

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(Denver, Colo.—October 21, 2011) Officials from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. General Services Administration, and the State of Colorado toured a Denver electronics recycler today as part of the Obama Administration’s strategy to promote job creation and the responsible recycling of electronics products. The visit to the Electronic Recyclers International facility featured a behind-the-scenes look at the recovery of precious and rare earth metals and other valuable materials from used electronics such as computers, monitors, televisions and cell phones.

The Obama Administration’s [“National Strategy for Electronics Stewardship”](#) is a comprehensive approach to support the responsible design, purchasing, management and recycling of electronics products. Led by EPA and GSA, and with the support of states, the actions taken under this strategy will strengthen the market for electronics recycling and provide a boost to a growing segment of the U.S. and Colorado’s economy.

“The emerging electronics recycling industry is beginning to tap vast environmental and economic potential,” said Jim Martin, Regional Administrator of EPA’s Denver office. “Our partnership with industry means more of our nation’s electronics products will be handled profitably and responsibly, and it means that growing companies like ERI will continue to bring green jobs to Colorado.”

The federal government is the nation’s largest single consumer of electronics, purchasing about \$85 billion of information technology annually, of which \$14 billion is for equipment. By some estimates, the federal government disposes of 10,000 computers every week.

“In the future, GSA will ensure that all electronics purchased by the federal government are reused and then recycled by a certified recycler,” said Susan Damour, GSA Regional Administrator.

As the first company in the world to achieve dual certification under both the E-Stewards and R2 (Responsible Recycling) certification programs, ERI operates its Denver facility in accordance with the most stringent standards in the electronics recycling industry. The company, based in California, employs 475 people nationwide, including 25 in Colorado. The company has doubled in size over the past year and anticipates continued growth.

“It is a tremendous honor to have been selected as the site for this event,” said John S. Shegerian, Chairman and CEO of ERI. “It’s exciting to see the federal government embark on this strategy to promote the use of certified electronics recyclers. This will help strengthen our industry here in the U.S., allowing us to create jobs while recovering valuable resources and protecting the environment. ERI has made it a priority to stay in touch with our green DNA, maintain a sustainable business model, and provide electronics recycling services in Colorado and across the country.”

Every year, Americans generate almost 2.5 million tons of used electronics, which are made from valuable resources such as precious metals and rare earth materials, as well as plastic and glass.

During the event, Shegerian discussed the tremendous promise of “urban mining,” a term he coined to describe the recovery of precious metals and other valuable materials from electronics products as opposed to extracting minerals and other raw materials from the ground. Reusing and recycling discarded electronics helps the environment by saving energy and keeping hazardous materials out of landfills.

The National Strategy for Electronics Stewardship includes four overarching goals.

- Build incentives for the design of Greener Electronics
- Increase the safe management and handling of used electronics
- Reduce harm from US Exports of E-Waste and improve the safe handling of used electronics in developing countries
- Ensure that the Federal Government leads by example

A key component of the strategy includes the use of certified recyclers and increasing the safe and effective management and handling of used electronics. There are two existing domestic third-party certification recycling entities, R2 and E-Stewards. Certified recyclers are regularly audited to ensure that electronics are recycled in a manner that is safe for human health and the environment.

More information on the EPA, the national strategy and industry collaboration: <http://www.epa.gov/electronicstrategy>

More information on GSA’s electronic stewardship goals and promoting federal agencies’ purchasing Environmentally Preferable Products: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/234565>

As the largest recycler of electronic waste in the US, Fresno-headquartered Electronic Recyclers International is licensed to de-manufacture and recycle televisions, computer monitors, computers and other types of electronic equipment. ERI processes more than 120 million pounds of electronic waste annually at locations in California, Washington, Colorado, Indiana, Massachusetts, Texas and North Carolina. For more information visit: <http://www.electronicrecyclers.com>.

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