

denverpost.com

EPA, GSA and Colorado State Officials Tour Electronic Recyclers International's Denver Facility

October 25, 2011

Officials from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), and the State of Colorado toured the nation's leading electronics recycler late last week as part of the Obama Administration's strategy to promote job creation and the responsible recycling of electronics products.

The visit to Electronic Recyclers International's (ERI's) Denver facility featured a behind-the-scenes look at the recovery of precious and rare earth metals and other valuable materials from used consumer electronics such as computers, monitors, televisions, and cell phones.

President Obama's "[National Strategy for Electronics Stewardship](#)" is a comprehensive approach to support the responsible design, purchasing, management and recycling of products such as televisions, computers, cell phones and other e-goods. Led by EPA and GSA, and with the support of states, the actions taken under this strategy are strengthening the market for electronics recycling and providing a boost to a growing segment of 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 and 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."

As the first company in the world to achieve dual certification under both the E-Stewards and R2 certification programs, ERI operates its Denver facility in accordance with the most stringent standards in the electronics recycling industry. The company, headquartered in Fresno, California, operates facilities dotted around the country and expects to hire hundreds of additional workers over the next 1-2 years to meet increased demands. ERI has doubled in size over the past year and anticipates continued rapid growth.

"It is an honor and a privilege to have been selected as the site for this event," said John Shegerian, Chairman and CEO of ERI. "The interest, strategy and commitment that the federal government is showing in our industry is truly a win-win for business and for the environment — allowing us to create more green-collar jobs while recovering valuable resources and protecting our planet."

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.

Shegerian showed the visiting officials some in-person examples of “urban mining,” a term he coined to describe the recovery of precious metals and other valuable materials from electronics products as opposed to mining of minerals from ores 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.

A key component of the national 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.

As the largest purchaser of electronics equipment in the U.S., GSA is taking steps to ensure that all products comply with comprehensive energy efficiency and environmental performance standards. GSA is ensuring that all electronics used by the Federal government are reused or recycled properly. GSA and EPA are also promoting the development of new performance standards for categories of electronic products not covered by current standards.

Original URL: <http://www.businesswire.com/news/denverpost/20111025006849/en>