

Fresno recycler receives \$10M investment

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Alcoa, the world's leading producer of aluminum, announced a \$10 million investment in Fresno-based Electronic Recyclers International.

The partnership gives [Alcoa](#) a 10% equity stake in [ERI](#) with an aim to bump up aluminum processing at ERI's seven national locations, including its Fresno headquarters on East Avenue. The arrangement will also allow the companies to share their expertise in the fast-growing electronics recycling industry.

Part of this mission will be carried out when Alcoa's Vice President and Chief Sustainability Officer Kevin Anton joins ERI's board of directors. With 30 years of experience in the metals and mining industry, Anton formerly served as vice president of finance and strategy for Alcoa Global Primary Products.

"They have metals expertise, geographic expertise, logistical expertise," said ERI's chairman and CEO John Shegerian. "They have 120 years of experience. This is one of the greatest brands in the world we can learn from them."

In addition, Alcoa will become an enterprise member of the Basel Action Network (BAN)'s e-Stewards Certification program, a designation ERI earned last [September](#) for their efforts at eliminating the export of hazardous electronic scrap to developing countries and halting the dumping of materials in municipal landfill or incinerators.

Alcoa also worked with ERI in 2010 to develop the free Aluminate recycling app for iPhone, as part of the company's goal of increasing the recycling rate of aluminum cans in the U.S. to 75% by the year 2015.

Shegerian said the partnership with Alcoa and a similar investment by Korean copper smelter [LS-Nikko](#), will help propel ERI even further onto the international stage and gain a stronger foothold in the U.S. where it plans to have 10 full-service recycling facilities operating before the end of the year.

"We're the only electronic waste recycler in the world to have our downstream partners as our investment partners and board members," Shegerian said. "That has never happened before."

Of the 120 pounds of waste ERI handled last year, 3% was aluminum. Alcoa, based in Pittsburgh, produces fabricated aluminum for consumer electronics. The company, operating in 31 countries, had \$18.4 billion in sales in 2009, shipping 5.1 million metric tons of aluminum products and 8.7 million metric tons of alumina, a starting material for the smelting of aluminum metal.

According to Alcoa spokesperson Libby Archell, 75% of all of the aluminum ever produced since 1888 is still in active use today. She added that aluminum content in laptops alone is expected to increase 30 percent by 2013.

“Through this partnership we really think Alcoa can bring its expertise in recycling to the growing challenge of -waste and enhancing the role aluminum plays in making electronics more sustainable,” she said.

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