

# Digital TV: It's a wasteland all right

*Posted by Michael Kanellos  
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*Digital TV will bring a new world of entertainment to consumers and generate a big honking pile of electronic waste.*



*(Credit: CNET Networks)*

Roughly 80 million analog TVs will get heaved out in 2008 and 2009, according to John Shegerian, CEO of Electronic Recyclers (ER), one of the largest e-waste recyclers in the U.S., and someone is going to have to dispose of those old TVs properly. The glass in the tube consists of about 22 percent lead.

Even without the digital TV mandate (which kicks in on February 17, 2009), the e-recycling business is booming. Roughly 65 million pounds of e-waste was recycled in 2005 in California alone after the state passed a recycling law and the figure shot up to 120 million pounds in 2006. More than 200 million pounds will be recycled in the state this year, he added.

Minnesota and Massachusetts have passed laws mandating e-waste recycling, and more laws are on the way. Approximately 35 other states are now tinkering with laws.

"E-waste bans are going to become mandatory," he said, during a presentation and hallway meeting at the ThinkGreen conference taking place in San Francisco.

ER has seen its revenues double every year for the past four years. Roughly half the revenue comes from recycling fees paid by states or large corporations to the company to dispose of waste. The other half comes from selling the indium, glass, lead, and other materials that come out of the recycling process.

"Everything in your cell phone or TV is reusable," he said.

The company has two facilities in the country, one in California and one in Massachusetts, but it plans to expand elsewhere.

One of the stumbling blocks has been getting people to understand e-waste laws, he acknowledged. Then there is the collection problem. A lot of people just leave this stuff in their garage. ER collects it itself but also has teamed up with Goodwill Industries. Serving as a collector netted the charity \$1 million in recycling fees in California, he added.