

Best Buy launches free recycling pilot project

June 3, 2008 - <http://tech.yahoo.com/blogs/null/94351>

I beat up on Best Buy a lot in this blog, but finally it looks like the company is doing something so right that even I can find nothing to complain about. To wit: In 117 stores, effective immediately, the company is accepting electronics gear for recycling at no charge.

The stores are located in Baltimore, San Francisco, and Minnesota state.

The rules are as follows: You can bring two items per day for recycling. It doesn't matter where you got the equipment originally. Pretty much all consumer electronics are included. TVs larger than 32 inches are excluded (as are console TVs, yikes!). No appliances like dishwashers, air conditioners, or microwaves are accepted either. But pretty much everything else is fair game: That old PC that's filled with dust bunnies. Your PlayStation 1. Your old Nextel phone.

How will the gear be recycled? I asked Best Buy's Kelly Groehler and here's her response: "We're working with Electronic Recyclers International (ERI), E-Structors, and Materials Processing Corporation (MPC), which will take the items we collect through this test and refurbish, reuse or recycle their components. Their operations are here in the U.S. Worth noting, we contractually prohibit all of our e-waste recycling partners from dumping practices."

If the program proves popular (which presumably means, if sales increase in stores where where the recycling program is offered), Best Buy may expand the program across the country.

The program was inspired by a proposal from As You Sow, a "social responsibility group" active in the e-waste segment. The group hopes that other large retailers will be spurred to similar action if Best Buy's program is a hit.

