

Mr. Tyrone Lampkin
P.O. Box 9000 - 841567
Woodville, Texas 75990-9000

Dear Mr. Lampkin:

Thank you for your letter regarding the recycling and disposal of obsolete electronics. The Administrator has asked that I respond to you in this matter.

Throughout the United States, there are many activities at the federal, state, and local governmental levels, as well as in the private sector, to divert the flow of obsolete electronics from disposal to reuse and recycling. These efforts began some years ago in the private sector and more recently became the focus of governmental efforts. The goal of these efforts is to develop greater national infrastructure to allow for more reuse/recycling of obsolete electronics in this country.

You requested information on how one could become approved by EPA to provide recycling services for used electronics. EPA does not have an approval program for electronics recycling facilities. These facilities are controlled at state and local levels. However, we are giving consideration to what role EPA can play in giving recognition to sound recycling facilities, both domestic and foreign. At this time, the Electronics Industry Association has a website (www.eia.org) that identifies many reuse and recycling facilities throughout the U.S. However, listing a facility on this website does not connote an "approval" of any kind.

You also asked why quantities of this country's obsolete electronics are being managed overseas rather than being recycled/disposed in the U.S. Obsolete electronics are legitimate products for reuse and recycling, and much of the market for this activity is overseas. At the same time, we recognize that it is important for recycling activities to be conducted safely. Therefore, EPA is working with other countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on development of a program that would provide much greater assurance that exports of recyclable materials will be environmentally sound.

EPA is also facilitating a national dialogue regarding the disposal, reuse and recycling of obsolete electronics called NEPSI (National Electronics Product Stewardship Initiative). This process is principally aimed at development of an infrastructure within the U.S. for the diversion

of obsolete electronics from disposal, and toward reuse and recycling alternatives. Many stakeholders are involved in the NEPSI dialogue process, and good progress has been made to date. Additionally, EPA will propose a rule this month that will revise our regulations to encourage the safe collection, reuse, and recycling of cathode ray tubes (CRTs) from computer monitors and televisions.

I have enclosed a fact sheet on the generation and management of obsolete electronics. You may also be interested in looking at our website on electronics product stewardship at www.epa.gov/epr. I hope that you find this information helpful in addressing your concerns. If you need further information, you may contact Bob Tonetti of my staff at (703) 308-8878 or tonetti.robert@epa.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Elizabeth A. Cotsworth, Director
Office of Solid Waste

Enclosures

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