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STATE ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCIES PROVIDE GUIDANCE ON ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT DISPOSAL

RALEIGH – Two of North Carolina's environmental agencies have joined together to assist local governments, businesses and industries in the proper disposal of electronic devices containing cathode ray tubes (CRTs).

The Division of Pollution Prevention and Environmental Assistance (DPPEA), along with the Division of Waste Management (DWM), has issued a fact sheet to clarify the duties and responsibilities of both the generators and handlers of electronic discards, especially those containing CRTs. The fact sheet also includes regulatory requirements and provides suggestions for alternatives to disposal.

The management of obsolete and discarded CRTs from computer monitors and televisions is a mounting concern in North Carolina as electronic devices begin to enter the solid waste stream in growing numbers due to technological change and consumer interest in new products. Electronics, especially CRTs, are complex products that contain a range of metals, such as lead, cadmium and mercury, which can be harmful to the environment if leaching occurs following landfill disposal.

The fact sheet gives regulatory requirements for CRT disposal. DWM officials agree with the U.S. EPA's position that CRTs removed from television and computer monitor housings are classified as a hazardous waste due to the presence of lead. To avoid potential future liability, the division encourages commercial generators of electronics discards to seek alternative recycling options instead of landfill disposal for these products.

According to the *1998 Markets Assessment of the Recycling Industry and Recyclable Materials* compiled by DPPEA's Recycling Business Assistance Center, North Carolina generates approximately 50,000 tons of electronic scraps per year from residential and commercial sources. The fact sheet provides suggestions for alternatives to disposal of electronic discards, including:

- Reducing product turnover by choosing products that last longer and using those products for their functional lives;
- Reuse options, such as donating to schools and charities;
- Leasing products from manufacturers who take back the product at the end of its useful life, and establishing a system for their proper management and/or disposal,
- And electronics recycling programs, which North Carolina municipalities, such as the town of [Cary](#) and Mecklenburg, Wake, Rowan, and Iredell counties, are putting in place.

The fact sheet can be found on the Web at: <http://www.p2pays.org/ref/14/13001.pdf>. For more information on CRT and electronic discards management, view DPPEA's core sector page on electronics at <http://wrrc.p2pays.org/industry/electronics.htm>.

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