



ELECTRONIC WASTE RECYCLING

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Virginia Recycling Association (VRA) to support an update to the Commonwealth's existing Computer Recovery and Recycling Act and its success in reducing the improper disposal of computer and electronic equipment (§§ 10.1-1425.27 et al, HB 344, 2008).

Reason for Policy

The purpose of the Electronics Recycling Policy is to promote the study and/or update of the existing Computer Recovery and Recycling Act (§§ 10.1-1425.27 et al, HB 344, 2008) in order to improve the effectiveness of the Act and to increase recovery of ensure the optimal value and utilization of the material as a marketable commodity and as feedstock for the manufacture of new electronics.

Who is/will be affected

Members, Public, Government, Suppliers, Manufacturers, Distributors, Retailers, Recycling and Solid Waste Industries

Supporting Information

Electronic waste contains toxic materials that are harmful to humans and to our environment including lead, mercury, cadmium, brominated flame retardants, plastics, and beryllium. According the EPA, during calendar year 2015, less than 40% of all electronics were recycledⁱ.

The Virginia Computer Recovery and Recycling Actⁱⁱ was originally drafted by Dell Computer and only applies to manufactures of laptops, desktops and monitors to establish take-back programs. According to the Electronics TakeBack Coalitionⁱⁱⁱ, which promotes green design and responsible recycling in the electronics industry, Virginia is one of the lowest recovery

rates of the 25 states that have electronics recycling laws. While the Computer Recovery and Recycling Act creates a system for Virginia residents to recycle electronics, the current law does not cover televisions, printers and other consumer electronics (e.g. mobile phones, tablets, copiers, fax machines, DVD players, etc.). In addition, the current law does not specify any level of performance and does not include a convenience standard. As a result, actual participation is limited and offers little relief to Virginia jurisdictions that often pay for and operate electronics recycling programs in their communities.

The Electronics TakeBack Coalition studied the 25 states that have electronics laws and developed a list of 10 lessons learned about state e-waste laws which could be used to modify Virginia's existing law. The coalition also had developed model e-waste legislation which could be used to replace Virginia's existing law.

Definitions

Commodity

A commodity is a basic good used in commerce that is interchangeable with other commodities of the same type. Commodities are most often used as inputs in the production of other goods or services. The quality of a given commodity may differ slightly, but it is essentially uniform across producers.

Electronic Waste

Refers to covered electronic equipment that has been discarded or is no longer wanted by its owner, or for any other reason enters the waste collection, recovery, treatment, processing, or recycling system.

Feedstock

Refers to the use of recyclable materials as a source for the development of new materials. This would include chemical and industrial processing that breaks down the recyclable material through liquefaction, smelting, crushing, and shredding.

¹ "Advancing Sustainable Materials Management: Facts and Figures Report." EPA, Environmental Protection Agency, 12 June 2019, www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/advancing-sustainable-materials-management.

ⁱⁱ "Virginia." *Computer Recovery And Recycling Act-Virginia Decoded*, Virginia Decoded, vacode.org/2016/10.1/11/14/3.6/.

ⁱⁱⁱ "Electronics TakeBack Coalition." *Electronics Take Back Coalition*, www.electronicstakeback.com/.