



Local Government – NGO Partnerships for Producer TakeBack Legislation in Texas

Jeffrey Jacoby – Staff Director, Texas Campaign for the Environment

STEP – February 28, 2008

Benefits of Producer TakeBack

- ▶ Takes the financial burden off local governments to handle product waste
- ▶ Puts responsibility for end-of-life on producers who make design decisions for their products
- ▶ Makes producers compete on how easily their products can be made, marketed AND recycled
- ▶ Market creates incentives for “cradle-to-cradle” design and toxic-free products

Role of NGOs

- ▶ Public education on problem of e-waste & producer takeback solution
- ▶ Build broad base of support for solutions
- ▶ Direct pressure on producers to support producer takeback recycling
- ▶ Mobilize Texans to contact local & state policy-makers
- ▶ Focus media attention on the issue

Factors for success of producer takeback bill in Texas

- ▶ Dell and other producers support for a bill
- ▶ Neutralize or find support from business associations
- ▶ Local government support from a variety of cities and counties with diverse demographics
- ▶ Broad bi-partisan support of legislators

March 2002

Electronics TakeBack Coalition recruited Texas Campaign for the Environment to put hometown pressure on Dell to take back and responsibly recycle obsolete products



- ▶ **TCE starts its door-to-door organizing**
- ▶ **TCE gathers more than 10,000 letters to Michael Dell**
- ▶ **TCE leaflets community & national events sponsored by Dell and develops contacts with allies, Dell employees and shareholders**
- ▶ **TCE organizes shareholders to question Michael Dell at July shareholder meetings in Austin**

National Computer Report Card Released January 9, 2003

Computer Companies FAIL to Protect Public Health and the Environment

FAILING 29% or less



Brother

Sharp

Samsung

Micron

Lexmark

Philips

Viewsonic

Lucky Goldstar

e-machines

Acer

Gateway

AST

Daewoo

NEC International

Wyse Technologies

POOR 30-39%

Hitachi

Hewlett-Packard/Compaq

Oki

NEEDS Improvement 40-49%

Canon

IBM

NEC

Toshiba

Matsushita/Panasonic

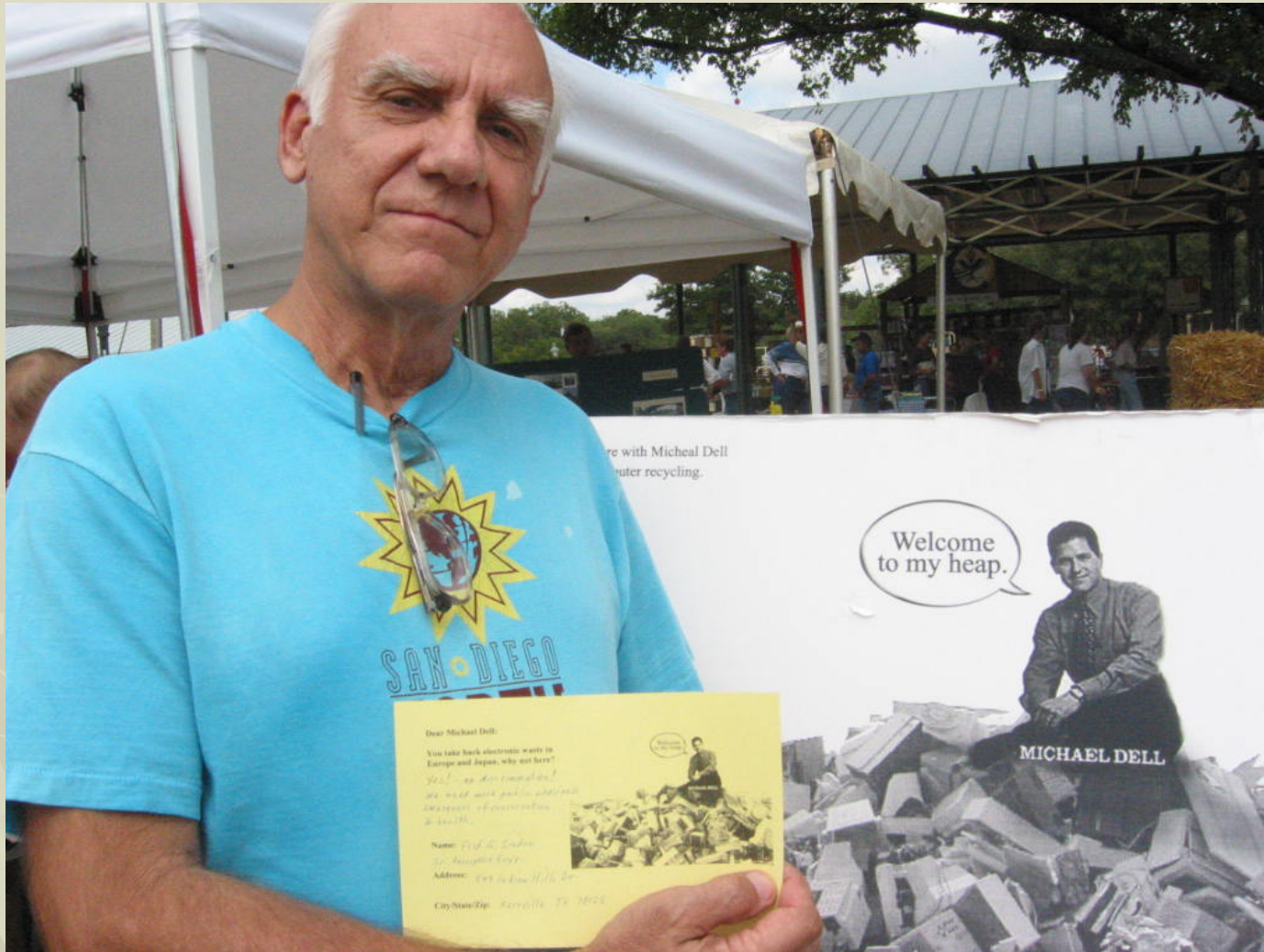
Seiko Epson

Sony

Apple

PASSING 50% or more

Fujitsu



...re with Micheal Dell
...puter recycling.

Welcome
to my heap.

MICHAEL DELL

Dear Michael Dell:
You take back electronic waste in
Europe and Japan, why not here?
Well...as far as I'm glad!
we need your public address
support of our recycling
2-10-11.
Name: Ted W. Larkin
77 Knight Way
Address: 149 S. Knoll Hill Dr
City/State/Zip: Knoxville, TN 37914



2003 & 2005

e-Waste Producer TakeBack Bills Introduced in TX House & Senate

- ▶ Rep. Elliott Naishtat and Sen. Gonzalo Barrientos introduce bills
- ▶ Bills receive hearing in environmental committees
- ▶ Bills are not voted out of committees



Dell to Stop Using Prison Workers

New York Times

July 4, 2003

By LAURIE J. FLYNN

Responding to concerns from both customers and environmental advocates, Dell Computer announced yesterday that it would no longer rely on prisons to supply workers for its computer recycling program.

Dell, the world's largest seller of PC's, said it had canceled its contract with Unicor, a branch of the Federal Bureau of Prisons that employs prisoners for electronics recycling and other industries.

An Open Letter to Michael Dell

Religious Leaders Call on Michael Dell to Increase Recycling and Reduce Toxic Hazards in Electronics Waste

Dell's computers and electronic equipment contain lead, cadmium, mercury, polychlorinated biphenyls, phosphor, beryllium and a host of other hazardous materials. When electronics become obsolete, are tossed out, and then broken apart in disposal or irresponsible recycling, these toxic ingredients can migrate into the environment, posing a risk to health care as well as for future generations.

Last year, a report (*Disposing America* at www.eric.org) showed that exports of US electronic waste (or e-waste) to China contaminated a large region, causing extensive soil, air and water pollution, and documented health threats due to contamination of the drinking water.

Many computers have poor factors that Dell is required to take them apart by a waste. Dell has done less to reduce the toxins in their computers, improve design for easier upgrades and recycling, and invest in technologies that make reuse alternatives work. In fact, until very recently Dell processed e-waste through the outdated US prison labor, where inmates work with many of the same primitive technologies used in developing countries such as China.

To Michael Dell's credit, after a blistering case study of this "high tech chain gang" (*Take it/Toss it/Save it* systems at www.computertakeback.com) Dell cancelled the prison labor contract. But now that Dell has agreed to stop using prison labor, it must come forward to meet its obligations to develop a program to really solve the problem.

While Dell has ceased giving press releases about the volume of waste the company collected during a series of in-store consumer drop-offs in various cities, the company has actually recycled only about 1/10th of 1 percent of the millions of tons of computers it has produced. Last year, Dell sold 13 million computers. According to a report on Dell's website, the company recycled less than 200,000 computers last year (or roughly 7 million pounds out of 455 million sold). By contrast, steel manufacturers EF recycled a total of almost 54 million pounds during the same period.

Dell can do better -- as they are required to do in Europe and Japan. We call on Michael Dell to accept responsibility for his products -- from cradle to grave. Our health, and the well being of the environment, depends on his taking leadership to make recycling a computer as easy as buying one.

Signed,
Dwight Lash

Rev. Dwight Lash, Ph.D., Minister
First Christian Episcopal Church of Austin

Signed,
Robert D. Roberts

Rev. Robert D. Roberts, Ph.D., Senior Pastor
First Baptist Church of Austin

Signed,
Billie Lash

Billie Lash, Ph.D., Senior Pastor
Dwight Lash Baptist Church

Also signed by others. See web links below.

Dell Computer
Recycling Center?

For the full text and complete list of signers, or for more information about the Campaign, see: www.computertakeback.com or www.texasenvironment.org

Clip out this note and mail it to Michael Dell.

Michael Dell, President
Dell Computers
One Dell Way
Round Rock, TX 78682



Dear Mr. Dell:

Please make Dell Computers as easy to recycle as they are to buy.

Signed _____

Support the Campaign! Clip out this note and mail it to us.

Total Campaign for the Election year • 611 South Congress • Suite 200 • Austin TX 78704
Tel: (512) 326-7615 • Fax: (512) 326-3912 • Email: web@texasenvironment.org

If I support your work, please let me know more about how I can help protect the environment from e-waste and pollution!

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____
Email: _____

Austin Religious Leaders Sign Open Letter to Michael Dell on e-Waste

Full-page ad in Austin Chronicle the day before Dell's Annual Meeting

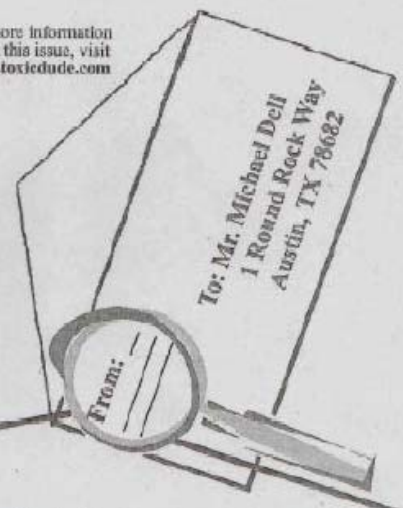
July 2003

Holiday Wish List

We, college students from more than 150 campus organizations in all 50 states, endorse the following 2003 holiday wish list and call on Dell, Inc. to lead its industry and make our wishes come true.

- 1. TAKE IT BACK!** - Dell should commit to recovering all of its computer and electronics products through a system that is free and convenient for all consumers and does not force local governments to pick up the tab. We know Dell can't do this tomorrow, but we expect the company to declare its support for meaningful goals and timetables that get near 100 percent product recovery by the end of this decade.
 - 2. MAKE IT CLEAN!** - Dell should commit to phasing out all hazardous materials from their products consistent with new European requirements and go one step further to eliminate all brominated flame retardants. Dell's product recycling must also ensure that hazardous materials in old machines are not recycled back into new products.
 - 3. RECYCLE RESPONSIBLY!** - Dell should commit to effective and enforceable environmental standards for processing electronic waste throughout its supply chain, continue to use only market labor and not prison labor, and ensure compliance by its contractors with all applicable laws governing export of hazardous electronic waste.
- P.S. When we return in campus in January, what should we tell the hundreds of thousands of students on our campuses - that Dell is fully committed to producer responsibility, or standing in the way of a comprehensive solution? Please publicly acknowledge your support of our wish list.

For more information about this issue, visit www.toxicdude.com



Albright Environmental Action Albright College Alpine Club Univ. of Colorado, Boulder Amnesty International Louisiana College Amnesty International Penn State Univ. Amnesty International Rosemead College Amnesty International Rutgers Univ. Amnesty International Univ. of Delaware Amnesty International Univ. of New Mexico Amnesty International Univ. of North Dakota Amnesty International Univ. of Wyoming Arizona Student Recycling Association Univ. of Arizona Asian American Alliance Columbia Univ. Asian American Alliance Notre Dame Asian American Student Association Univ. of Nevada, Reno Asian Student Alliance Univ. of Pittsburgh Asian Students Association Univ. of North Carolina Big Red Go Green Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison Black Student Alliance Univ. of Colorado, Boulder Brown Environmental Action Network Brown Univ. PSU Campus Green Summit State Univ. Business Action for Sustainable Enterprises Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison CALPIRG Univ. of California, Los Angeles CALPIRG/Ecopledge Univ. of California, Davis Campaign for the Environment at Texas State Texas State Univ. Campus Ecology Keene State College Campus Green State State Univ. Common Ground Plymouth State Univ. COPPIRG/Ecopledge Univ. of Colorado, Boulder Drake Environmental Action League Duques Univ. Earth Club Southern Utah Univ. Earth, Soil and Water Conservation Club Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo Ecology Now Univ. of Nebraska, Lincoln ECO-OSU Oklahoma State Univ. Ecopledge Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison Ecopledge Boston College Enlight Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison Environmental Action Club Sidmore Environmental Action Committee Harvard College Environmental Alert Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison Environmental Alliance Duke Univ. Environmental Alliance Univ. of Central Arkansas Environmental Awareness Club Montana State Univ., Billings Environmental Club Druy Univ. Environmental Club St. Edward's Univ. Environmental Club Troy State Univ. Environmental Club Winona State Univ. Environmental Concerns Organization DePaul Univ. Environmental Consciousness Outreach Tufts Univ. Environmental Conservation Organization Jacksonville Univ. Environmental Conservation Organization Univ. of North Dakota Environmental Group Villanova Univ. Environmental Organizers' Network Wesleyan Univ. Environmental Quality Missouri College Environmental Society Montana State Univ. ESAVE Univ. of Cincinnati Free the Planet George Washington Univ. Free the Planet Grinnell College Friends United for Nature Conservancy DePaul Univ. Greening Biotech McCall Univ. GreenSense Ecology Club Univ. of Wisconsin, Stout Health Students for Social Action Univ. of New Mexico School of Medicine Hiding Club Univ. of Colorado, Boulder Honors Society Sierra Nevada College Hunger and Homelessness Campaign Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison Idaho Progressive Student Alliance Idaho State Univ. IPIRG Indiana Univ. Longwood Environmental Awareness Foundation Longwood Univ. MASSPIRG Student Chapter Amherst College, Berkshire Community College, Bristol Community College, Clark Univ., Fitchburg State College, Framingham State College, Greenfield Community College, Holyoke Community College, Massachusetts College of Art, Mass Bay Community College, Middlesex Community College, MIT Worcester Community College, North Shore Community College, Northern Essex Community College, Salem State College, Smith College, Springfield Technical Community College, UMASS-Amherst, UMASS-Boston, UMASS-Dartmouth, Westfield State College, Worcester State College Net Impact Daniels College of Business, Univ. of Denver Net Impact George Washington Univ. Net Impact Monterey Institute of International Studies New Information Technologies Class Muhlenberg College OSPIRG Lane Community College OSPIRG Portland State Univ. OSPIRG Southern Oregon Univ. OSPIRG Univ. of Oregon Progressive Student Organization Univ. of Texas, San Antonio Public and Environmental Affairs Council Univ. of Wisconsin, Green Bay Recycle UCC Univ. of Central Florida Recycling Club Montana State Univ. Recycling Task Force Univ. of Texas, Austin Recycling Team Franklin Pierce College Responsible Consumer Network Univ. of Oregon Rice Environmental Club Rice Univ. Roots and Shoots Washington State Univ. SEA-Change Univ. of Maine, Farmington SEAK Southwestern Univ. Sierra Student Coalition Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison Sierra Student Coalition West Virginia Univ. Society of Environmental Communicators Northern Arizona Univ. SPEAK Univ. of Louisiana, Lafayette St. Olaf College Sierra St. Olaf College St. Olaf Environmental Coalition St. Olaf College Student Environmental Action Coalition Illinois State Univ. Student Environmental Action Coalition Indiana Univ. Student Environmental Center Southern Illinois Univ., Carbondale Student Environmental Council Iowa State Univ. Student Sierra Coalition Elon Univ. Students at Evergreen for Ecological Design Evergreen State College Students for a Sustainable Earth Western Michigan Univ. Students for an Environmentally Active Campus Marquette Univ. Students for Ecological and Environmental Development Northwestern Univ. Students for Environmental Action Univ. of Hawaii, Hilo Students for Environmental Action Northeastern Univ. Students for Environmental Action Johns Hopkins Univ. Students for Environmental Action Kansas State Univ. Students for Environmental Awareness Rutgers Univ. Students for Environmental Awareness Clarkson Univ. Students for Environmental Awareness Univ. of Georgia Students for PIRGMI Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor Students for the Environment Univ. of Delaware Students Responsible for Ecological Awareness and Management Lexington Community College Students United for Progressive Change Univ. of Virginia Suffolk University for Environmental Action Duke Univ. SURGE Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill Survival Center Univ. of Oregon Sustainable Earth Society Univ. of Alaska, Anchorage The Environmental Action Group Univ. of San Diego The Recycling Club George Washington Univ. US Environmental Coalition Univ. of Iowa United Students Against Sweatshops at BUVA Univ. of Virginia University Green Mississippi State Univ. UMM Fair Trade Initiative Univ. of New Mexico USD ECO Univ. of South Dakota Utah Greenaction Corps Utah State Univ. UVM Computer TakeBack Campaign Univ. of Vermont Vanderbilt Sierra Club Vanderbilt Univ. Wastebusters Club Ohio Univ. WIDPIRG Univ. of Wisconsin, Milwaukee WISPIRG Bookswap Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison Yale Student Environmental Coalition Yale Univ.

This ad has been paid for by the GrassRoots Recycling Network.

Full-page ad in the Austin Chronicle endorsed by 160 student groups from 50 states calls on Dell to support Computer TakeBack Campaign platform December 18, 2003

Dell, HP and NGOs Release:

**Joint Statement of Principles on Producer Responsibility for U.S.
Electronic Waste**

May 2004

We support the policy of producer responsibility in the U.S. for electronic products at the end of their useful lives...

This preferred policy approach includes: a convenient, fair and equitable system of collection that does not create economic disincentives for consumers to participate and is premised upon financial participation by producers so that taxpayers, local governments, or others do not shoulder all the financial burdens of recycling and disposing of electronic products.

June 2006

Dell Product Recovery Policy

- ▶ Free end-of-life management for any brand electronic product when an individual purchases a new Dell product.
- ▶ Free end-of-life management for any Dell-branded product regardless of purchase of new product worldwide.
- ▶ To ensure a level playing field amongst all producers, Dell supports legislation under which all producers are responsible for proper end-of-life management of their electronic products.

Oct 2005

Digital Dump in Nigeria Has e-Waste from Texas



San Antonio Express-News

SAN ANTONIO
EXPRESS-NEWS
TUESDAY
OCTOBER 25, 2005
SECTION B

Digital dump creates concerns

S.A. city equipment ends up in Nigerian wasteland.

By ANTON CAPUTO
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

The halls of San Antonio's city government and the sprawling dumps of Lagos, Nigeria, probably don't have much in common. Much that is stored in 1000 Gateway computer tagged "Property of City of San Antonio 821465."

The report, titled "Digital Dump Exporting High Tech Residue and Abuse in Africa," found that the continent is increasingly becoming a dumping site for electronic waste from developed countries. In 2002, BAN issued a report of similar digital dumping in China, India and Pakistan.

See COMPUTERS-5B

Computers create digital dump in Africa

CONTINUED FROM 1B

Most is being shipped under the guise of recycling or closing the digital divide by providing developing countries with secondhand equipment they can put to use. Unfortunately, as much as 75 percent of the equipment is considered junk by those businesses in Nigeria that import it, and ends up dumped in ways that would likely not be allowed in the United States.

"The effect is that they are ending up in dumpsites along the coast and are not getting recycled and are often burned," said Richard Osterweil, BAN's toxic policy analyst. "By allowing this type of trade, we as a nation violate environmental justice principles."

It is not clear how the city's computer ended up in the dump. The computers are typically auctioned off at the online site www.publisour.com, according



LEFT: Workers utilized a seagoing container full of discarded televisions and computer monitors at Alaba market in Lagos, Nigeria. Those that don't work will be tossed into dumps outside the market. ABOVE: This computer from the City of San Antonio is one of those

SAN ANTONIO
EXPRESS-NEWS
WEDNESDAY
NOVEMBER 2, 2005
SECTION B

San Antonio Express-News

City dumping the way it retires old computers

Changes planned after one became Nigeria's garbage.

By ANTON CAPUTO
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

The city of San Antonio doesn't want any more of its old computers to end up in a Nigerian garbage dump. Or any dump, for that matter.

City officials, on the heels of a recent report that revealed one of their computers was among thou-

sands getting dumped as garbage in Nigeria, plan to change the way they dispose of their old PCs to ensure that the machines are properly recycled or recycled.

Hugh Miller, acting director of the city's Information Technology Services, said the pending change is not a direct result of the report or its coverage in the San Antonio Express-News. But he did say the recent revelations "solidified the need to have it done."

At issue is the fate of the roughly 8,000 computers the city cycles

through every four years. Currently, the computers are auctioned 100 or so at a time to the highest bidder, Miller said.

This was the case with computer No. 821465, which was auctioned last November, only to end up as garbage in the Nigerian port city of Lagos.

"Once they are sold, it's hard for us to keep full track of what that buyer does with them," Miller said. "They probably sold another lot to Africa, and whoever was in that group went through and said, 'We

can probably use this, and we can use this. What do we do with the rest?'"

The rest is dumped in heaps around the African countryside and then burned or left to possibly seep dangerous chemicals such as lead and mercury, according to a report released earlier this month by the Basel Action Network.

This is a growing problem that is not likely to go away. Nearly 250 million computers in the U.S. will be

See CHANGE/5B

Change planned for city's old PCs

CONTINUED FROM 1B

come obsolete in the next five years, according to the National Safety Council.

The average computer monitor contains 4 pounds of lead.

Most of the secondhand equipment is shipped to Africa to be reused, BAN found. But as much as 75 percent of the equipment is considered junk by those businesses in Nigeria that import it and ends up as discarded hulks.

Miller, who has been with the city five months, wants to eliminate the municipality's contribution to the problem.

He wants to work out a deal with the computer manufacturer to properly dispose of the machines after their working life with the city is over. He's also considering first offering them for sale to city employees.

The plan will be instituted through a request for proposals put out to computer manufacturers or through a state contract, but Miller said the details likely wouldn't be worked out until after the first of the year.

Robin Schneider of the Texas Campaign for the Environment applauds the move. She said Dell, which supplies most of the city's computers, has several programs that could work. A Dell representative did not return calls Tuesday.

"What we found often times is the people who do the purchasing don't necessarily talk to the people who do the end-of-life handling, and we need to close that loop," Schneider said. "San Antonio will be in good company."

acaputo@express-news.net

SAN ANTONIO CURRENT

OCTOBER 27 - NOVEMBER 2, 2005

CITY COMPUTER ALLEGEDLY AMONG ILLEGAL E-WASTE

A Gateway computer reportedly marked with a City of San Antonio identification tag has been found among e-waste that allegedly has illegally dumped in Nigeria.

Eighty-eight computers from the City of Houston, a hospital in Wisconsin, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, several state agencies, and British and German companies were among those that were dumped.



Once City property, this Gateway computer was found among illegally discarded electronic waste in Nigeria, according to a watchdog group.

Basel Action Network, a watchdog organization that monitors toxic trade, including electronic waste, investigated the dump, and its findings were released by Texas Campaign for the Environment.

According to BAN, obsolete computers, televisions, mobile phones, and other used electronic equipment are exported from the U.S. and Europe to Lagos, Nigeria for reuse and repair. According to BAN, experts in Lagos complain that of the 500 40-foot containers that arrive in the city each month, as much as three-quarters of the contents is irreparable and cannot be resold. This e-waste is reportedly dumped and/or burned in empty neighborhood lots, roadsides, and swamps.

Computers often contain poisonous flame retardants, lead and mercury, and toxic leachate, materials, and smoke from the waste can be hazardous to human health and the environment.

The City's Information and Technology Department had not returned calls to the Current as of press time, but look for an update on the Current's website, sacurrent.com

— LISA SORG

TCE Starts Working with Local Governments to Pass Resolutions for e-Waste Producer TakeBack

- ▶ **The City of Georgetown in Williamson County passes first resolution June 14, 2006**
- ▶ **Plano in Collin/Dallas/Denton Counties September 11, 2006**
- ▶ **Kyle in Hays County October 3, 2006**
- ▶ **The City of Dallas added this issue to its agenda for the 2007 state legislative session October 18, 2006**
- ▶ **The City of Highland Village in Denton County December 12, 2006**
- ▶ **The City of San Marcos in Hays County January 8, 2007**
- ▶ **The City of Avery in Red River County January 16, 2007**
- ▶ **The City of Lakeway in Travis County January 22, 2007**
- ▶ **Hays County the first county to pass a resolution February 14, 2007**
- ▶ **Austin City Council in Travis County March 22, 2007**
- ▶ **Round Rock City Council in Williamson County March 22, 2007**
- ▶ **Tarrant County March 27, 2007**
- ▶ **The City of Rowlett in Dallas County April 3, 2007**
- ▶ **Travis County April 10, 2007**
- ▶ **City of Sherman in Grayson County May 7, 2007**
- ▶ **City of Richardson in Collin/Dallas Counties on May 14, 2007**

Benefits of Local Resolution Strategy

- ▶ Canvassers provide a way for residents to voice their support and identify leaders willing to take initiative
- ▶ Local governments begin learning about producer takeback
- ▶ Unanimous local government support demonstrates broad bi-partisan appeal and influences state legislators
- ▶ Press generates more interest and knowledge of producer takeback



Council takes on tech trash

Georgetown calls for electronic waste rules

By Francisco Vara-Orta
AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

Consumers aren't the only ones frustrated about what to do with obsolete and broken electronic equipment such as televisions or computers.

A surging international debate over electronic waste, or e-waste, has cities such as Georgetown plugging into residents' concern over consumers and businesses tossing old equipment in the trash, possibly leading to contamination from the electronics' internal toxic chemicals.

Last week, the Georgetown City Council voted unanimously to approve a resolution calling for the Texas Legislature to require vendors and companies who provide electronic products to city and state governments to take the equipment back after it is discarded. Currently, each entity must figure out what to do with its obsolete electronics.

Georgetown became the first city in Texas to vote on an electronic waste resolution, but city officials said it's more of a political statement that bears no legal consequences.

The council acted after receiving about 200 letters and a petition with about 800 signatures in favor of the resolution.

"We're trying to send the message to other city and state governments that e-waste is a fast-growing problem and the

See WASTE, Page 2

WASTE: Old electronics will go to new facility

Continued from Page 1

technology industry needs to be encouraged to make more environmentally sound products," said Patty Eason, a Georgetown council member.

The effort is being led by the Texas Campaign for the Environment, an Austin-based advocacy group that is trying to line up similar resolutions in Plano and Dallas, with eye on the Legislature.

Executive Direc Schneider said a rec her group found t Texas cities would timate \$41 million on electronic waste requirement for c vendors to handle t "E-waste is t growing muni stream in the Un Schneider said.

She praised Geor ing the city "took r right direction of w be a very long pat hensive national e lation."

Eason said Geor olution is part of a bi get federal laws wri a uniform policy i turers to handle m waste.

"Citizens and citi to deal with the pr only going to get w said.

Southwestern Laura Hobgood- chairs the school's tal studies progr council a letter su resolution.

"It's like we have cultural blind spot to the dangers i

waste," Hobgood-Oster said. "Technology has been so fast-paced in the last century that I don't think we've realized yet what we're going to do with all that obsolete equipment."

Approximately 62 percent of U.S. households had computers in 2003, compared with only 37 percent in 1997, according to a 2005 report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office.

Dallas Business Journal

OCTOBER 13-19, 2006 | \$2.00

Plano in 'e-waste' crackdown

Dallas also eyes pushing producers to resolve electronic trash problem

BY MARGARET ALLEN | STAFF WRITER

Anxious to stem a costly and polluting deluge of high-tech trash, Plano has become the first city in North Texas to nudge manufacturers of computers and other electronic devices to take back worn-out products from consumers.

But the Collin County suburb won't be the last.

The action by Plano — which includes new fees and a resolution urging a mandatory statewide solution to the problem — mirrors other so-called "producer take-back" initiatives now

being considered in Texas and across the nation.

Those efforts are part of a fast-evolving national push by electronic manufacturers and U.S. lawmakers who hope to resolve the burgeoning and costly "e-waste" problem before others do it for them.

"Producer take-back" — holding manufacturers financially responsible for disposing of their electronic products once consumers have worn them out — is in its infancy in Texas and the United States. But new laws

already are in force in Europe, where U.S. manufacturers now must comply with strict handling of electronic waste.

Currently it's legal in Texas to throw electronic trash into city-owned landfills. But municipalities are beginning to balk at the practice, mindful of pollution, potential liability and cost.

Over the next decade, it's estimated that Texas taxpayers, through local governments, will spend \$66 million to dispose of old computers and televisions. That's \$173 million for North Texas alone, experts say, with "e-waste" the fastest growing waste stream in city-owned landfills.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is developing guidance for e-waste. Four states — California, Maine, Maryland and Washington — already have passed producer take-back laws.

E-waste includes computer processing units, monitors, televisions, printers, scanners, copy and fax machines, phones and electronic game units. The devices contain lead, mercury, cadmium, chromium and flame retardants in significantly hazardous and toxic amounts, the EPA says.

The products also contain valuable materials, such as precious metals like copper, engi

neered plastics and glass. That has made them attractive to entrepreneurs in developing nations, where U.S. recyclers have been selling e-waste in huge quantities, sometimes violating the law. Activist groups have documented unsafe handling of the toxic materials by low-wage workers in China, Vietnam, the Philippines and Nigeria.

In North Texas, the city of Dallas will consider a resolution supporting producer take-back on Oct. 23, according to Laura Fiffick, director of the city's office of environmental quality. Her staff will brief the Dallas City Council's transportation and environment committee, Fiffick said. If a resolution passes there, it will go to the full council.

"It's one of those environmental topics that's coming to a peak right now," Fiffick said.

Very expensive proposition

The environmental group Texas Campaign for the Environment is helping spearhead the producer take-back movement in Texas. The group ultimately wants a federal law, said Robert Andrews, head of TCE's Dallas office.

In Texas, TCE is soliciting letters calling for producer take-back from the public, then delivering those to city council members to promote passage of a

resolution. Besides Plano, TCE has garnered support from residents in Arlington, Fort Worth, Denton, Highland Village, Grand Prairie, Garland and University Park, Andrews said. The goal is to have Dallas, Fort Worth and Arlington all on board by January, when state lawmakers convene for the 2007 legislative session.

That's the trend nationwide, which concerns the Virginia-based trade group, Electronic Industries Alliance. EIA represents the 1,300 companies that make up the bulk of the \$400 billion U.S. high-tech and electronics industries.

"We would like to see this addressed at the national level," said Richard Goss, senior director of environmental affairs for EIA. "But it's a very, very expensive proposition and there is broad disagreement about how to pay for it."

The cost of recycling computer monitors and televisions alone is estimated at up to \$300 million annually, Goss said.

EIA is working under deadline pressure with the Congressional E-waste Working Group of the U.S. House of Representatives to resolve the issue by January.

"They are trying to get all the stakeholders together to hammer out something that everyone can live with," Goss said.

Austin-based computer maker Dell Inc. (Nasdaq: DELL), which has bowed in recent years to aggressive pressure from environmental groups, decided recently to formally support producer take-back legislation nationwide, including in Texas, according to Bryant Hilton, spokesman.

"It's a bit of a shift for us, policy-wise," Hilton said. "So now that's what we'll be communicating to lawmakers."

The shift coincides with the company's latest and most comprehensive version of its own producer take-back program. Dell, which from the start has been at the leading edge of producer take-back, started Sept. 29 taking all its old computers and printers free of charge from customers, including picking up and returning packaged products.

Dell recycled 39.6 million pounds of its product in 2005 under a less expensive version of the program, Hilton said. By 2006, it expects to have taken back 275 million pounds, he said. He had no cost estimates for the program.

Audit trail provided

In 2005, the city of Plano gathered about 55 tons of e-waste, said Shannon Urub, the city's chemical education coordinator.

The city has hired Carrollton-based Intechra, one of the largest electronic asset disposition companies in the United States,

to responsibly dispose of the old equipment.

With customers like Southwest Airlines Co., BAE Systems and Pier 1 Imports, the company boasted to www.solidwaste.com that in 2005 it kept 10,600 tons of e-waste out of landfills by remarketing and recycling.

"The recycler, which doesn't sell its electronic trash overseas, provides an audited trail of all electronic trash, including each component that's removed, reused, remarketed or recycled, according to Colleen Sherman, Intechra's senior business development manager.

With the new disposal program, Plano's e-waste disposal is no longer free. To cover the cost, the city is charging \$5 to dispose of monitors, \$10 for TVs and 15 cents a pound for everything else, Urub said. Owners of the e-waste pay the fees.

"The city of Plano has decided it's worth it to us to keep it out of the landfill," Urub said. "Ninety-five percent of it will have to be broken down and sold as scrap. So you're paying someone to completely dismantle it and wipe the hard drive, and for the reporting.

"But we also feel it's a fair trade," she said. "Your Social Security number isn't going to end up somewhere in Asia."

mallen@cpjournals.com | 214-706-7119

April 10, 2007

Local government leaders, recyclers and TCE press conference at State Capitol



**Hays
County**



**Texas Disposal
Systems**



**Tarrant
County**



TEXAS CAMPAIGN
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

City of Lakeway



Computers and TVs Should Meet Their Makers We Support TakeBack Recycling

**City of
Rowlett**



**City of
Avery**



**City of
San Marcos**



**City of
Kyle**



**City of
Georgetown**

Public Push for Governor's Signature & Letters Sent by Local Governments



e-Waste Bill Passes Unanimously in Texas!

Toshiba's program i Dell's, although Dell's available worldwide. Dell's products free, and competitors' products computer purchase. Dell has expanded initiatives. It has been computer custom money for planting tr sorb carbon emission! Dell has expanded i other products and r tions from owners of r brands. It will make available worldwide!

Austin American-Statesman

Council takes on tech trash

Georgetown calls for electronic waste rules

By Francisco Varo-Gota

WASTE: Old electronics will go to new facility

Continued from Page 1

Technology industry funds to be encouraged to make more environmentally sound products," said Terry Lamm, a Georgetown council member.

The effort is being led by the Texas Campaign for the Environment, an Austin-based advocacy group that is trying to line up similar regulations in Texas and Dallas, with eyes on the 2007 legislation.

Executive Director Robin Schneider said a recent study by her group found that Central Texas alone would spend an estimated \$1.1 billion through 2013 on electronic waste if there is no requirement for companies or vendors to handle the waste properly. "It's a huge, unmet need," he said. "The industry is growing exponentially, and we need to get ahead of it."

Schneider said the proposed legislation, which is being drafted by the Texas Campaign for the Environment, would require companies to handle electronic waste responsibly. "We're not asking for a very long path to comprehensive national e-waste legislation," he said.



A push, literally, for recycling

A typical lot of computer parts purchased by Virginia Tech students last week is being hauled to a recycling facility on Thursday. The market was meant to encourage buy-back programs to sign a bill into law.

dumped in landfills and other areas where it is incinerated. A recent article explained that state will also be forced to deal with electronic waste. The Texas House also made such a recycling bill. Many "recycling" programs are simply electronic waste to create salvage operators in developing countries rather than recycle e-waste domestically. Texas has led the water, air and land in electronic waste. China and Nigeria. Our Chamber salvages workers explained, "We did not care much when outsiders talked about the environmental pollution here. We did not see any harm. But now, it's not just any getting... Unfortunately, there is a... worldwide... But we need a... state will also be... European Union... South Korea are... have produced... recycling laws... Ryle, but pain... resolution in... this policy. "Sam... also and take... burden of landf... these trash off... of materials' shou... These resolution... momentum for... that puts... by for recycling... Robert Schneider... Texas entrepreneur

Herald Democrat

Plan to control 'e-waste' could be national model

Austin American-Statesman

Firms starting to stem wave of toxic tech junk



By Craig Semons

As computer and other electronics are discarded, many end up in this nation's landfills. A recent study by the Texas Campaign for the Environment found that Central Texas alone would spend an estimated \$1.1 billion through 2013 on electronic waste if there is no requirement for companies or vendors to handle the waste properly. "It's a huge, unmet need," he said. "The industry is growing exponentially, and we need to get ahead of it."

Monthly March 5, 2007

CHRONICLE

MAY 21, 2007



Members of the Texas House of Representatives had to pass the question of e-waste recycling. The bill would require companies to handle electronic waste responsibly. "We're not asking for a very long path to comprehensive national e-waste legislation," he said.

Dell takes free recycling global

Computer maker is first to take step without requiring purchase of new products

Dell gets even greener

Computer maker is first to take step without requiring purchase of new products. Dell's program allows customers to return old computers for free recycling. This is a significant step in the industry's move towards sustainability. Dell's program is a model for other companies to follow.

Austin American-Statesman

TURNING GREEN HAS ITS REWARDS

By Tommie Dyer

RECYCLING LAW. The Texas Campaign for the Environment has announced that it will be launching a campaign to encourage buy-back programs to sign a bill into law. The bill would require companies to handle electronic waste responsibly. "We're not asking for a very long path to comprehensive national e-waste legislation," he said.

offer the recycling program to other parts of the U.S. where the program has been successful. Dell's program is a model for other companies to follow. The Texas Campaign for the Environment is leading the effort to pass the bill. "We're not asking for a very long path to comprehensive national e-waste legislation," he said.

San Antonio Express-News

Legislators turned 'green' corner

Legislators turned 'green' corner. The Texas House of Representatives has passed a bill that would require companies to handle electronic waste responsibly. This is a significant step in the industry's move towards sustainability. The bill would require companies to handle electronic waste responsibly. "We're not asking for a very long path to comprehensive national e-waste legislation," he said.

Monday, June 4, 2007

Austin American-Statesman

Dell vows to become greenest tech company

Dell vows to become greenest tech company. Dell has announced that it will be launching a campaign to encourage buy-back programs to sign a bill into law. The bill would require companies to handle electronic waste responsibly. "We're not asking for a very long path to comprehensive national e-waste legislation," he said.

THE SUN

GREEN: Program to help PR and revenue, too, Dell says

GREEN: Program to help PR and revenue, too, Dell says. Dell's program is a model for other companies to follow. The Texas Campaign for the Environment is leading the effort to pass the bill. "We're not asking for a very long path to comprehensive national e-waste legislation," he said.

TECH MONDAY

Monday, March 1, 2007



Computer firms recycling e-waste



Computer firms recycling e-waste

Stated Purposes of HB 2714

► Establish a comprehensive, convenient, and environmentally sound program for the collection, recycling, and reuse of used computer equipment.

► The program is based on individual manufacturer responsibility and shared responsibility among consumers, retailers, and the government of this state.

Key Provisions of HB 2714

- ▶ Manufacturers must provide free and convenient programs to collect and recycle their own brand of computers
- ▶ Covers sold to consumers and home-based businesses
- ▶ Covers desktop computers, laptops, monitors and display devices without tuners
- ▶ Retailers can only sell brands of equipment that appear on a TCEQ-maintained list of manufacturers with compliant recovery programs
- ▶ TCEQ required to educate the public regarding the producer takeback recycling program and issue an annual electronic report to the Legislature.
- ▶ Consumers are responsible for clearing information off their computer equipment before turning their equipment in for recycling and disposal.

Key Implementation Dates for HB 2714

- ▶ DEC 5, 2007 TCEQ voted to propose draft rules & invited ideas on various ways to effectively implement new law
- ▶ FEB 4, 2008 Deadline for official public comment
- ▶ APR 2, 2008 Proposed TCEQ Meeting to Adopt Rules
- ▶ MAY 1, 2008 Deadline for TCEQ to Adopt Rules
- ▶ SEP 1, 2008 Producer Plans Must be Operational to Continue Selling Equipment

Local Governments, Environmentalists & Responsible Recyclers Share Common Interests in Strong Rules

- 1) The TCEQ rules should include an approval process and convenience standards for producers plans.
- 2) Annual reports on the program must provide opportunity for local governments and others to give input on implementation and be an effective tool to measure success.
- 3) TCEQ rules should ensure collected e-waste is handled responsibly.
- 4) Public education effort needed to raise awareness of new producer takeback recycling law.

Next Steps

- ▶ Submit comments to TCEQ Commissioners directly
Participate in delegations to meet personally with TCEQ staff and Commissioners
- ▶ Request that state legislators press TCEQ for strong rules
- ▶ Build momentum through local governments, COGs, state agency, producers, retailers and NGOs to have effective public education campaigns when program starts Sept. 1

Next Steps, continued

- ▶ Pass Local Government Resolutions for Producer TakeBack of TVs and other products
- ▶ Work for inclusion of TVs and other improvements in 2009 session
- ▶ Collaborate on passage of producer responsibility for other product and packaging wastes, possibly through a Texas Product Stewardship Council
- ▶ Consult www.TexasTakeback.com site for producer takeback program updates

For More Information

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