



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 15, 2013

Media Contact:

Rachel Rose Belew
Director of Communications
rachel@productstewardship.us
(o) 617.236.4886
(m) 404.550.5494

New York State e-Waste Law Boosts Recycling and Reduces Government Costs, New Report Finds

But despite successes, significant challenges to achieving a financially and environmentally sustainable electronics waste management system remain

ALBANY, New York—Easier consumer access to scrap electronics collection sites, spurred by manufacturer funding, has contributed to an increase in e-waste recycling and a decrease in government spending in New York State, according to a new report by the Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) for the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). But the report, *Evaluation of the New York State Electronics Producer Responsibility Law*, also highlights a number of challenges that need to be overcome if the law is to help New York achieve greater fiscal and environmental benefits.

“While the law has resulted in critical improvements in New York’s recovery of e-waste, more work needs to be done to ensure that all New Yorkers have convenient access to safe and free electronics recycling,” said Kate Sinding, senior attorney with the NRDC. “New York has to figure out how to better serve the residents of the nation’s most densely populated city, how to expand and maximize resources dedicated to e-waste recycling, and how to adjust to changing market forces.”

According to the report, in the first partial year of the law’s implementation, which began April 1, 2011 and ended December 31, 2011, the number of electronics take-back sites had increased by 77 percent across the state, and over 44 million pounds of scrap electronics were collected. These results are important because electronics contain potentially toxic substances, such as lead, mercury, and flame retardants, which can be released into the environment if not properly managed at the end of their useful life. Electronics recycling helps prevent the release of these hazardous substances. The law also saved local governments millions, if not tens of millions, of dollars, by shifting the financial burden of post-consumer product management away from municipalities and toward producers.

"The e-waste law has helped protect New York's environment while boosting the state's economy by creating jobs and reducing costs to local governments," said Andrew Radin, chair of the New York

*Product Stewardship Institute, Inc. • 29 Stanhope Street • 3rd Floor • Boston, MA 02116
Telephone: (617) 236-4855 • Fax: (617) 236-4766 • www.productstewardship.us*

 Non-chlorine Bleached / 100% Post-Consumer Recycled Paper / Soy Ink

The Product Stewardship Institute is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Product Stewardship Council (NYPSC). "The increase in electronics recycling has helped New York's e-waste recyclers grow, and brought new recyclers into the New York market, creating jobs and adding to the state's tax base. At the same time, municipalities have experienced significant cost savings by accessing free recycling through manufacturer programs, and by avoiding disposal costs."

But the law has not been an electronics waste panacea, according to the report. There is still too little public awareness about take-back initiatives, which leads to lower product recovery rates. Moreover, residents of New York City do not have access to enough convenient collection sites, further reducing participation rates. Limited resources within the state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), the government agency responsible for administering the law, combined with a lack of public disclosure of state e-waste collection data, has also hindered program progress. Further, serious inefficiencies in statewide and national recycling markets for cathode ray tubes (CRTs), which are common in older monitors and TVs, have adversely affected the economics for responsible e-waste recyclers.

"While New York's e-waste collection program—which was established by the law—has had a net positive impact on electronics recycling in the state, there are still some fairly large kinks that need to be ironed out to optimize the system," says Scott Cassel, chief executive officer of PSI. "A collaborative dialogue among government, non-government organizations, recyclers, retailers, and manufacturers is the first step to finding and implementing a comprehensive solution—and to ensuring a cleaner, safer environment for New Yorkers."

The report offers a number of recommendations to help strengthen the electronics waste take-back and recycling program created under New York's law. In addition to a stakeholder dialogue, these recommendations include:

- The State should ensure that adequate funds go to the DEC for proper oversight of the program, rather than allowing them to be used for other purposes, as they are currently;
- The State should require that all recyclers be third-party certified, or that they meet equivalent requirements, to ensure that electronics waste is, in fact, being handled responsibly and safely;
- Manufacturers should improve their efforts to promote the program and educate the public about convenient drop off opportunities through its website, www.greenergadgets.org;
- All other stakeholders—retailers, recyclers, and governments—should also promote the program; and
- The State should maintain a ban on disposing of CRT displays—the lead-containing glass displays that are found in most non-flat screen televisions—to support the reclamation of CRTs in the recycling market.

To view the entire report, [click here](#).

###

About the Product Stewardship Institute (PSI)

The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing the health and environmental impacts of consumer products. Founded in 2000, PSI brings together key stakeholders with varying interests to develop product end-of-life solutions in a collaborative manner, with a focus on having manufacturers assume primary financial and managerial responsibility. With a robust membership base of 47 state governments and over 230 local governments, as well as partnerships with more than 95 companies, organizations, universities, and non-U.S. governments, PSI advances both voluntary programs and legislation to promote industry-led product stewardship

initiatives. For more information, visit PSI online at www.productstewardship.us. You can also follow PSI on Twitter at twitter.com/ProductSteward and on Facebook at facebook.com/ProductStewardship.