



## **Staples to take back consumer electronics for recycling**

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Staples is giving customers an alternative to trashing unwanted electronic equipment or sticking it out on the sidewalk with a "for free" sign.

Starting Monday, the office-supply chain will accept any brand of used desktop and notebook computers, monitors, printers, fax machines and all-in-one devices with a fee of \$10. Smaller items like keyboards, mice and speakers are free to drop off. TVs will not be accepted because they are not sold by the chain.

The fee offsets Staples' cost to collect the unwanted items from its retail outlets to electronic waste recycling plants. Staples worked with the non-profit Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) and the Environmental Protection Agency's eCycling program to test the process in 2004. The project was a trial to see if Staples' product distribution model could be used in reverse, where the trucks that brought in new inventory could take back the recyclable items. During that test, conducted at several New England-area stores, 57 tons of e-waste were collected and recycled, according to PSI.

PSI says the Staples example shows that retailers should be able to take used products back in the same manner as products that have been damaged or returned.

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