

E-WASTE RULES IN EFFECT AS OF JANUARY 1

A new state law that went into effect January 1 is designed to keep old computers and televisions out of landfills.

The law requires manufacturers to collect and recycle certain electronics from households and K-12 public schools. The law also will prohibit landfill disposal or incineration of certain electronics beginning September 1.

Wisconsin's electronics recycling law is expected to provide residents and schools with more recycling sites across the state, reduce pollution from improper disposal of electronics and encourage expansion of the recycling industry within Wisconsin.

"We hope the new law eventually reduces disposal costs," said Wess Damro, recycling manager for Brown County Port and Solid Waste Development. One long-term goal is to make repair or reuse of electronics easier, he said.

Only 18 percent of obsolete electronics currently get recycled or reused, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Most of the rest are disposed of in landfills.

Dan Kohler of Wisconsin Environment said about 10,000 tons of computer monitors and 24,000 tons of old televisions are being dumped each year in Wisconsin.

Recycling electronics previously was voluntary in Wisconsin. The new law assigns primary responsibility for collection and recycling of products to the manufacturer.

What does this mean for Albany residents? We try to plan certain dates to accept electronics, but cannot guarantee an electronic acceptance date. It is highly recommended that when you purchase a new computer or television; have the retailer you purchased from take the old unit.