

Electronics and Product Stewardship

- The State of Minnesota has worked closely with local governments to develop systems for managing waste responsibly. Despite our hard work, waste is increasing much faster than our population.
- We've learned something in the last few years: Our garbage can be a resource.
- In Minnesota, we're looking for a better way to keep old TVs and computers out of the garbage. We want a partnership with manufacturers, retailers and government working together to establish recycling systems that convert these waste products into new products.
- Nationwide, 20.6 million computers became obsolete in 1998. By 2007, an estimated half billion computers will be obsolete.
- We don't want old TVs and computers in the garbage. I'm told each TV and monitor contains 5 to 8 pounds of lead, as well as other toxic metals and substances. They also contain valuable glass, metals and plastics that could be recycled instead of thrown away.
- It's getting very expensive to deal with all of these old TVs and computers. Hennepin County expects to spend a million dollars this year to collect and recycle old electronic items from residents. Government can't afford to collect and manage electronics alone.
- As part of Minnesota's product stewardship program, we have asked electronics manufacturers to share the costs and responsibility for collecting and recycling old electronic products from residents.
- When manufacturers share the costs of recycling products, they have an incentive to use recycled materials in new products and design products to be less toxic and easier to recycle.
- I am very pleased that Sony is taking a national lead on this issue. After working with Minnesota for more than a year, Sony has agreed to pay to recycle all old Sony products collected from residents.
- Sony will work with us to establish collection sites around the state. What we do here can be done everywhere in the United States.
- Now we need other TV and computer manufacturers to follow Sony's lead.
- The Office of Environmental Assistance is working with Sony and other manufacturers to test collection and recycling strategies, and make it work.



- We see this partnership with industry as a national model.
- Citizens want to do the right thing with their old TVs and computers. We thank Sony for taking the lead on this important national issue. We look forward to hearing how the other manufacturers plan to meet the challenge that Sony is issuing today.