

PHOTOGRAPHED
AT TOTAL
RECLAIM IN
SEATTLE, WITH
TELEVISIONS
WAITING TO BE
RECYCLED, BY
RICK DAHMS ON
JANUARY 10

recycling **ecohero no. 4**

MATERIAL MAN

SEGO JACKSON // SNOHOMISH COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

When Sego Jackson relocated to the Seattle area in the late '70s from rural Ohio, he joined Snohomish County's Solid Waste Management Division and established one of the first curbside recycling programs around Puget Sound. He's still in that role, but these days Jackson is also a nationally recognized advocate for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), whereby manufacturers are held accountable for the fate of their products and packaging after consumers are done with them. While the federal government has been loath to adopt EPR rules, Jackson has been urging manufacturers (and the government agencies that regulate them) to take on the task of recycling the products they bring to market, to save money—and the environment. He has advised everyone from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to Wal-Mart—which is considering screening products according to EPR standards as part of its omnibus

sustainability overhaul—on creating forward-thinking policies encouraging the recycling of electronics by those who make them.

■ Closer to home, Jackson was instrumental in the creation of the Northwest Product Stewardship Council, which works to integrate “cradle-to-cradle” product stewardship principles (manufacturers incorporate materials from their own used products into new products) into the region's policy and economic structures. He also helped formulate Washington's landmark E-Waste Recycling Bill, SB 6428. The law, which goes into effect in January 2009 and calls on electronics manufacturers to pay the tab for recycling their products, has influenced policymakers around the world. “The most exciting activity in the long run is the shift from the throw-away society to one where resources are continuously cycled back into commerce for reuse and remanufacture,” says Jackson.