

Pilots in Washington State

Pilots or demonstration programs have been happening in Washington State for a number of years. They have been implemented in both rural and urban areas, and have used various types of infrastructure including both drop-off and curbside collection. Many are financed partially or completely using end-of-life fees, some have been financed with grants, and one program currently under development will use up-front funding from manufacturers and retailers.

Here in Washington, a sampling of pilot programs and ongoing programs include:

- Single-day drop-off events run by governments in western Washington, e.g. Tacoma, Thurston County and Lewis County.
- Single-day drop-off events run by governments in central/eastern Washington, in Douglas and Chelan Counties; Kittitas County; and Benton County/City of Richland.
- Weekend drop-off events at one Best Buy Store (one weekend each, 2001 and 2002)
- Single-day drop-off event sponsored by Hewlett-Packard/Starbucks in 2003.
- Single weekend drop-off event at Staples stores throughout the region in 2002.
- Single day drop-off event by 4-H technology group in Snohomish County in 2003.
- Special cleanouts for schools in Snohomish County and Kitsap County, partially funded with CPG grants
- Ongoing drop-off program through the “Take It Back Network” in Snohomish and King Counties, using both retailer and business locations.
- Ongoing drop-off programs at transfer stations in Kitsap, Thurston and Snohomish Counties.
- Ongoing collection through HHW events in Clark County.
- Curbside collection programs in Kirkland, Bellevue and Redmond.
- Ongoing drop-off at private transfer stations: Rabanco described their program at the Jan. 23 public hearing.
- A consortium of manufacturers covers the cost of recycling their own brand of products for select collection programs in Washington that utilize Philips Environmental as the contractor.

Details on participation and cost can be provided for these programs. In addition to pilot programs, a number of useful studies have been done. These include the “Assessment of Electronic Waste Generation, Collection, and Processing in Eastern Washington” and “E-Waste Generation in Northwest Washington.”

Outside of the state, many pilot programs have been implemented that can provide useful information for us. A quick search has generated comprehensive reports about such programs in California, Minnesota, Florida, Iowa, Missouri, and Massachusetts. These reports document participation, costs, etc. The Northeast Recycling Council (NERC) project in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont was specific to rural communities. The Minnesota report compares participation and cost of a number of varied projects, including curbside and drop-off at household hazardous waste sites, retail, etc.

Finally, there are projects funded by EPA that are currently being developed to demonstrate manufacturer and retail participation and funding of programs.

- Here in Washington, the Northwest Product Stewardship Council and Regional Electronics Take It Back Network have received a \$90,000 EPA grant to test the feasibility of collecting used electronics in a retail setting and to determine whether this arrangement can provide the public with a network of convenient, ongoing, drop off locations. A large electronics retailer has agreed to pilot the program. Manufacturers will contribute funds to offset the costs of processing their own equipment. This project is in the process of being implemented in Western Washington and Oregon.
- In New England in the spring, Staples will be handling the collection of end-of-life electronics at 26 of its retail stores, and manufacturers are being asked to pay for the recycling of their own name brand products. Information will be gathered to study the feasibility of using reverse distribution to ship recovered material to electronics recyclers.