

E-Cycle Washington

2019 Local Government and Community Satisfaction Report Summary

Draft – April 2020



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Introduction

The E-Cycle Washington program completed its eleventh year of operations in 2019.

The program's eleventh year showed a continued decrease in the weight collected of unwanted covered electronics (TVs, computers, tablets, e-readers, portable DVD players, and monitors).

This decrease is expected to continue as the backlog of stored CRTs reduces, and more recently manufactured electronics become lighter.

Over 21.4 million pounds were recycled in 2019 compared to over 25.3 million pounds in 2018.

Funded by manufacturers, E-Cycle Washington's 287 collection sites and collection events provide a statewide network of free drop-off sites where Washington residents can recycle covered electronic devices.

The Department of Ecology (Ecology) asked local governments to fill out a survey to help Ecology determine the effectiveness of the program in 2019, and identify potential areas for improvement. Out of the over one hundred local governments contacted, Ecology received 14 responses.¹

¹ Some responses in this report may have minor punctuation, spelling, and grammar corrections made by Ecology staff.

1. Local Government Name

Responses:

-  Chelan County
-  City of Auburn
-  City of Kent
-  City of Kirkland
-  City of Olympia
-  City of Sedro Woolley
-  City of Sequim
-  City of Spokane Solid Waste
-  City of Vancouver Public Works
-  Clark County
-  Grant County Solid Waste
-  Island County Solid Waste
-  King County Solid Waste Division
-  Lincoln County Public Works

2. Were the collection services provided by the WMMFA in your community accessible and convenient for the public? If there are services that are not working; please explain why in the comment section below.

Were the collection services provided by WMMFA in your community accessible and convenient to the public?	
Yes	93%
No	0%
No response provided	7%

Other Responses:

-  There has been some confusion over televisions being taken at Goodwill stores. Goodwill staff have told customers they only accept flat screens TVs. What isn't clear is whether that is only for retail or for the E-Cycle program as well.
-  It would be helpful to have collection services in the most northern and southern regions of Grant County.

3. Did you have any suggestions for improving the services in your community? Please be specific if you are recommending additional collection locations/services.

Responses:

- ♻️ More publicity or education about the program. Many people still do not know about the program.
- ♻️ Periodically notify us when new collection sites are added so we can update our websites and outreach materials. Maybe quarterly?
- ♻️ More advertising and promotion of this amazing program the better! (see final question for a little more info).
- ♻️ I think there are two misunderstandings: people don't realize they can use the service (provided via Goodwill in Sequim), so more marketing by Goodwill is needed (posters, etc.), and people don't trust that the electronics are truly going to be reused/recycled/removed from the waste stream.
- ♻️ Keep up the outreach and make sure there is sufficient training for take back staff regardless of location.
- ♻️ Expand beyond just tvs, monitors, computers, laptops, and portable dvd players. There are so many electronics now and residents keep asking us what to do with them.
- ♻️ Expand the covered products to include printers, scanners, fax machines, keyboards, phones, copiers, etc... As for collection/location services, I would like to see another collection location in Snohomish County, in or near Stanwood, Washington.
- ♻️ Adding peripherals and other electronic devices to the program is needed.

4. Briefly describe the E-Cycle Washington program public outreach and education conducted by your Agency/organization this year.

Responses:

- ♻️ We only publish information about it on our website. We do not have enough funds to provide further education. Our funds are insufficient from the state to provide for the required programs by the state.
- ♻️ Information on where customers can recycle is located on our website and outreach flyers that are distributed at our events where we have a WRR educational table. We also mail out an annual LHWMP residential and multifamily newsletter that includes this information.
- ♻️ We provide information about this program on our website (www.kentwa.gov/talkingtrash) and on our flyers when advertising our three recycling events held throughout the year.
- ♻️ Website, flyers, mailers, and word of mouth.
- ♻️ Sequim has not focused education on E-Cycle. We refer to Clallam County and City of Port Angeles outreach information because it is kept up to date.
- ♻️ Link on county-wide online waste directory, information on website, handouts at outreach events, extra information provided at neighborhood clean up events.
- ♻️ We provide information on locations and details on how the program works through the Recollect app and web widgets. We also explain options in our Recycling 201 class offered to neighborhoods and encourage them to share articles (including one on electronics recycling) within the neighborhoods:
<https://www.cityofvancouver.us/cmo/page/recycleu-articles>
- ♻️ Sites are listed in our mobile and web app where people can search for items. When they type electronics or like TVs E-Cycle drop off sites will come up. Additionally we train volunteers to table at events and one of the things they learn is about this program and they share that knowledge with the public.
- ♻️ I include the information in our recycling brochures and let people know when they call.
- ♻️ E-Cycle collection is advertised on the county's solid waste web page, and in our solid waste, recycling, and household hazardous waste brochures.
- ♻️ We have brochures that are distributed at our transfer stations/offices and the KC SWD website advertises the program. We list E-Cycle WA on our curbside recycling/garbage mailers and websites. We, do none. We have an E-Cycle contractor located at our landfill facility. All information and advertising is up to them. We only supply the site and let customers know it's here and available for use.

5. Please tell us your story in the comment box below: How has E-Cycle Washington affected your community since it began in 2009? (For example: if this program did not exist, what would happen to unwanted electronics in your community? How much money does this program save your residents and local government?)

How has E-Cycle Washington affected your community since it began in 2009?	Yes	No	NR*
Are businesses providing recycling in your community who were not providing that service before E-Cycle Washington?	50%	29%	21%
Are people recycling their electronics now when they may have thrown them in the trash before the E-Cycle program?	71%	7%	22%

*NR=No response provided.

Responses:

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 People are taking the computers to the Goodwill. However there is only one in Wenatchee, and no program at the far ends of the county in Leavenworth and Chelan areas. People take TVs and computers to the transfer stations where they are disposed into the landfill. Regardless if they are informed of the option to dispose of a those items and have them recycled, they are not willing to drive 30 miles further. There is also still a lack of knowledge about the items being recycled. Since the collection point is at a Goodwill, people assume they will resell the unit whole. They will say, "but it does not work," not knowing that it does not matter, and that the components are recycled. For most product stewardship programs, it would be best if they were all collected at disposal locations where people can dispose of many things at one site.
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 This has reduced the illegal dumping of the materials that the City ends of having to pick up (when on public right-a-way).
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 Electronics use to be thrown in the alleys and left at abandon houses and thrown in remote locations around the City. Now everyone brings it to recycling site cause its free. The next step is to let businesses bring the electronics to the sites also, for low cost or for a fee but lets, get recycled.
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 These are slightly educated guesses, only!
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 We did have a few government and other partner supported opportunities for electronics recycling or reuse before the E-Cycle Washington program started up. We have not had to maintain those so are saving money and residents have many more opportunities now to manage this material. We also send our MSW to Oregon landfill so there is a disposal ban on these materials at that site - which helps in our promotion.
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 In 2019 Island County's E-Cycle collection accepted 134,030 pounds (67 tons) of discarded electronics for recycling.
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 E-Cycle Washington makes it convenient for our residents to recycle their equipment. However, many residents ask if the service could be expanded to take other products like

printers, scanners, all-in-ones, keyboard, etc.

6. Other comments about the E-Cycle Washington program.

Responses:

-  Thank you for posting a recent billboard in the Wenatchee area about the E-Cycle program.
-  This is an example of what we all can do! Great job everyone!
-  This is a wonderful program and one that I feel really should be advertised more to the public. People don't always know they can drop off these items to the specific locations for end of life recycling. They often say, "Well, my TV doesn't work - why would I bring it to the Goodwill?" My suggestions again would be more advertising and promoting this program as much as possible! Thank you!
-  Tell the public more what happens after we drop stuff off... Thank you!
-  It seems to be very well managed and we appreciate the good partnership by Ecology and industry partners!
-  Please expand the list of items collected to anything with a cord or battery.
-  Great program, I wish we could get more electronics covered for recycling in this program.
-  Great program!

Summary

Ecology continues to work with the Washington Materials Management & Financing Authority (WMMFA) to make improvements to the E-Cycle Washington program. Suggestions for improvements provided by local governments are a key part of that process and are greatly appreciated by Ecology. Public outreach and education about the availability and benefits of the program is a priority for Ecology and the WMMFA.

In 2019, E-Cycle WA was advertised through print media, commercials, signage, and through outreach efforts. E-Cycle WA was advertised in Spanish in *Eco-Lógica Magazine's* summer issue, and the program was featured in the Chinook Book from January to July. Advertisements were also featured in NW Military online and print from August to December in 2019.

Throughout the year utility inserts and billboards were utilized to advertise the program, with a particular focus on Eastern Washington, peninsula area, and Southeastern Washington. The billboard in Yakima featured E-Cycle Washington information in Spanish. Partnerships were formed with members of Area Agencies on Aging to distribute brochures to assisted living and senior living facilities. Additional partnerships were made with property managers and local governments to distribute brochures.

Additional 2019 outreach included a partnership with the Walla Walla Sweets baseball team to provide outreach to the community, and a sign advertisement was used throughout the year in the Yakima SunDome. Throughout 2019, E-Cycle WA was promoted at tabling events in western, central, and eastern Washington.

Outreach in 2020 will include participating through community partnerships. The program will again partner with the Walla Walla Sweets to provide outreach to the community. The sign advertisement at the Yakima SunDome will continue through the year, and the WMMFA intends to fund outreach efforts throughout the state. Additionally, there are plans to coordinate with local governments to share information about the program through literature and social media, and outreach opportunities will be explored throughout the year to increase awareness of the E-Cycle WA program.

A common suggestion from local governments and others for improving the program is to expand the scope of electronic products accepted for free recycling. Ecology supports adding more products to the program's scope of eligible electronics. Ecology will work to accomplish this by looking for legislative opportunities to expand the scope of products covered by the E-Cycle WA law.

This report will remain in "Draft" form to accommodate any additional comments/suggestions received from local governments in the coming months.

