

E-Cycle Washington

2020 Local Government and Community Satisfaction Report Summary

Draft – May 2021



E-CYCLE
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ecyclewashington.org

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Introduction

The E-Cycle Washington program completed its twelfth year of operations in 2020.

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

The year's decrease resulted mainly from the statewide restrictions placed on businesses in an effort to stop the spread of Covid-19. Many E-Cycle WA collection sites temporarily closed. Since the beginning of the pandemic, 51 collection sites remain closed primarily because these locations are unable to maintain safe distances between employees and the public. When things return to normal, we are hopeful these sites will again participate in the program.

Even with the effects of Covid, this decrease is expected to continue as the backlog of stored CRTs reduces, and more recently manufactured electronics become lighter.

Over 15.2 million pounds were recycled in 2020 compared to over 21.4 million pounds in 2019.

Funded by manufacturers, E-Cycle Washington's 227 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 2020, and identify potential areas for improvement. Out of the over one hundred local governments contacted, Ecology received 18 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:

-  City of Anacortes
-  City of Auburn Solid Waste
-  City of Federal Way
-  City of Lynnwood
-  City of North Bend
-  City of Olympia
-  City of Sedro Woolley
-  City of Sequim
-  City of Spokane
-  Clark County
-  Franklin County Solid Waste
-  Grant County Solid Waste
-  Kitsap County Public Works
-  Lincoln County Public Works
-  Pierce County
-  Seattle Public Utilities/City of Seattle
-  Wahkiakum Health and Human Services
-  Walla Walla Recycling Inc (collector)

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	72%
No	17%
No response provided	11%

Other Responses:

- ♻️ If they were I don't know about them. But I don't believe they were offered here in 2020 (which may well be a pandemic thing.)
- ♻️ I don't know what this is (WMMFA) and doubt others on staff do either.
- ♻️ There is nothing available within the City, except the once annual collection event I host that gets paid for by E-Cycle; it would be very nice if there was a site for drop-off throughout the year, but we are a small community. The closest site is in Issaquah.
- ♻️ There are two in our City. Uptekk is great, but the Goodwill is not accepting TV's and is not as accessible to the public as in the past.
- ♻️ Because Grant County is so large, many parts do not have convenient access.
- ♻️ Last year one of our two collection sites, Deseret Industries, closed down. During COVID-19, Goodwill stopped collecting covered electronics. Luckily, Video Only signed up as a collector. Otherwise we didn't have any options for our city of 100,000 people.
- ♻️ Seattle is working with Peter Thermos to understand whether the existing law covers curbside collected covered items. Our collection contractors, WM and Recology, collect materials on our behalf. Customers can make a "special items" request for mixed electronics pick-up, including E-Cycle covered items. We'd like to see if registered processors would be allowed to pick up from our contracted collector yards free of charge, per the stewardship model. We understand that free E-Cycle drop-off locations are widespread in Seattle, but we make recycling even more convenient to customers through curbside collection upon request.

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:

- ♻️ I would love to be able to offer this service or a drop box for electronics that could be picked up. Also a service for alkaline battery recycling and florescent light recycling, and electronic ballast recycling, all local. What happens now? They go in the trash.
- ♻️ Expand what electronics can be collected beyond the current list. It should be anything with a battery or cord. It is too difficult for the public to understand otherwise.
- ♻️ I think it's the marketing & communications that are needed more than frequency or location.
- ♻️ It would be great if maybe one of the thrift stores or local hardware store accepted E-Cycle material, but currently no businesses sell or accept this material within the community. Other than a thrift store, I don't know who else may accept it.
- ♻️ Let all electronics be free with no limits.
- ♻️ I don't think enough people are aware of this.
- ♻️ We would like another vendor.
- ♻️ Need constant outreach to remind residents where to go or how to find out where to go.
- ♻️ We could use additional locations such as in the Mattawa and Grand Coulee areas.
- ♻️ Accept peripherals with computers. Have Goodwill clarify that they accept covered electronics, working or not.
- ♻️ More outreach! Residents still come to our facilities first and we have to turn them away and educate. Add peripherals to accepted materials list.
- ♻️ Ensuring that these services are available and accessible to underrepresented communities and people who rely on public transportation.

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

Responses:







- ♻️ Zero.
- ♻️ We had virtual trainings and classes this year about recycling beyond the curb and this included E-Cycle WA. We also have a a-z web and app tool that lists locations for them to take these specific electronics.
- ♻️ Listing of county and state websites on our outreach materials.
- ♻️ This year has been a challenge with Covid-19 so basically has been word of mouth.
- ♻️ We hosted a community recycle event in which a vendor accepted all E-Cycle material in September 2020. No other education or outreach occurred other than advertising that event.
- ♻️ Website, flyers, emails.
- ♻️ Unless someone contacts us and request the City does not have an outreach program for this.
- ♻️ We had one public event scheduled with E-Cycle but it was cancelled due to COVID. E-Cycle does pick up supplies from the city at least quarterly.
- ♻️ Newsletters, website, social media, educational table events, community events, recycle schedule calendar/guidelines.
- ♻️ We typically have fliers available at information booth, but due to COVID-19, no events were held. I direct callers or other inquires to Goodwill or the website.
- ♻️ Posted on website and in printed waste reduction guide. Work with local online resource directory to keep up to date information.
- ♻️ We include the information in our flyers and inform the public when they call in asking.
- ♻️ We included information on recycling covered electronics that was in booklets sent to every household and business, posted information on our website, and included recycling options for covered electronics at our general electronics recycling event.
- ♻️ Our facility staff direct people to collection sites when they arrive at a facility with a E-Cycle Item. We have information on our website - it's one of the most popular links in our recycling/disposal directory.
- ♻️ We include E-Cycle and other drop-off and stewardship program information in our annual customer solid waste mailer, and Where Does it Go Flyer. We also include information on our Where Does it Go Web site materials look-up tool.
- ♻️ We advertise these services on our website, recycling menu, social media, and in our inbox where residents have an opportunity to request information on specific items like electronics.

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?	61%	33%	6%
Are people recycling their electronics now when they may have thrown them in the trash before the E-Cycle program?	83%	11%	6%

*NR=No response provided.

Responses:

-  We would be picking up this stuff all over town, great program. Please add all electronics with no limits and really save the planet.
-  Illegal dumping of electronics has reduced considerably.
-  Still a challenge to provide customers information on where to take electronics and what is and is not accepted in the program. If the list was more comprehensive to include cords, keyboards, mouse, etc. it would be easier to use.
-  Offering no-cost recycling has kept covered electronics out of the garage and reduced the financial burden on low income residents who are often gifted older TVs and computers.
-  We've observed less illegal dumping of E-Cycle items since the program began.
-  The program may have reduced illegal dumping of electronic items.

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

Responses:

- ♻️ If it can expand... great!
- ♻️ Keep it up but also ramp up the education campaign - thank you.
- ♻️ It's wonderful! We appreciate them capturing the costs of our E-Cycle from the collection events; just wish we could have a local dropoff location in the Snoqualmie Valley.
- ♻️ When people and businesses do find out how to recycle some of their electronics they are relieved. Like to see more effort go into recycling proliferies such as cords, mice and such.
- ♻️ Would love to utilize them more.
- ♻️ As a collector my cost of doing business has increased substantially since the program was started. It would be nice to see an increase in the rebate we are currently receiving.
- ♻️ Glad the state has this program.
- ♻️ Love the program. Sill hard to explain to residents that their peripherals cannot be recycled at the same place.
- ♻️ It's a good program and we like that it's around! We do wish there was more marketing of it - social media, radio, TV, etc. Thanks for putting up a billboard in our community last year!

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 2020, E-Cycle WA was advertised through print media, commercials, signage, and through in person outreach efforts. E-Cycle WA was advertised on social media platforms, and the program was featured in the Chinook Book from January to July.

Additional 2020 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. In March 2020, E-Cycle WA was promoted at the South Sound Sustainability Expo, a tabling event with the Northwest Product Stewardship Council (NWSPSC). And in December 2020, E-Cycle WA was promoted at the TRENDS Property Management Tradeshow, a virtual tabling event in Seattle.

Outreach in 2021 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.

