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E-Cycle Washington

2024 Local Government and Community Satisfaction Report Summary

Draft—May 2025

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Introduction

The E-Cycle Washington program completed its sixteenth year of operations in 2024.

The program's sixteenth year showed a 0.27% decrease in the weight collected of unwanted covered electronics (TVs, computers, tablets, e-readers, portable DVD players, and monitors).

The year's small decrease was in the monitors and computer category, with a slight weight increase in collection of TVs. Over the last two years, we've seen year end collection totals begin to level off from the decrease in weight that began in 2013.

A decrease in collected weight is expected in a mature program as the backlog of recycled CRTs decline, consumer preference for laptops over desktops continues, and newer manufactured electronics become lighter. Flat panel TVs and monitors can weigh about 93% less than CRT TVs and monitors that were first collected in the program. More producers and retailers also provide their own takeback programs.

Over 12.84 million pounds were recycled in 2024 compared to 12.87 million pounds in 2023.







Funded by manufacturers, E-Cycle Washington's over 200 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 2024 and identify potential areas for improvement.¹

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

1. Local Government Name



Responses:

-  Seattle Public Utilities
-  King County Solid Waste Division
-  City of Auburn
-  City of Walla Walla
-  Lopez Solid Waste Disposal District
-  Yakima County Solid Waste
-  Grant County Solid Waste
-  City of Sequim
-  City of Kirkland




2. Were the collection services provided by the MMFA 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 MMFA in your community accessible and convenient to the public?	Responses
Yes	5
No	1

Responses:



-  Access to E-Cycle WA collection sites continued to decline in 2024 in Seattle due to the closure of additional Seattle Goodwill donation locations. The number of collection sites in the city has declined by 70% since 2019 (from 30 sites in 2019 to 9 sites in 2024) and is now at an all-time low since program launch. Until the 2024 Annual Report is published and I can see how many collection sites are still in place statewide, I'm not sure what the latest statistics are, but as of 2023, when Seattle had 3 more sites than it does now, the number of collection sites per residents had already plummeted to half of what it was when the program began. The loss of three additional sites in Seattle in 2024 only exacerbated this decline, and the disproportionate lack of access for Seattle residents relative to the statewide average: Seattle accounts for 10% of state population, but less than 5% of E-Cycle sites are located in Seattle. Seattle Public Utilities has stepped in to fill this gap in service by offering special curbside collection service to residential customers and by hosting six collection events per year across the city, but our ratepayers currently bear the majority of costs of this service. In 2024, we were able to work with WMMFA and Friendly Earth to arrange for having CEPs collected through our special curbside pick-up service and collection events get sent for processing under the E-Cycle WA program. This means that the costs of transportation and processing of these materials are now covered by WMMFA, but the majority of costs – the curbside collection service itself – remains a burden on our ratepayers.
-  Comparing data on collection sites in King County from 2024 to 2025, 8 collection sites (of which 6 Goodwill stores) closed, while only one opened. There used to be 100 sites in King County, now there are less than 50. The number of sites seem to be correlated with the amounts of collected covered electronic products. We do not have the 2024 data, but the amounts of Covered Electronic Products collected by E-Cycle WA seem to be continuing to decrease in King County (from 2022 to 2023). It was positive to see that E-Cycle WA had six more collection events in King County compared to last year. Vashon Island is part of unincorporated King County with over 10,000 residents, yet they do not have any accessible or convenient collection services provided by WMMFA. Based on a mini survey of 136 residents in King County

(conducted through SurveyMonkey), we gathered the following information: - of people who recycle e-waste, 43% travel more than 5 miles, and 25% travel 3-4 miles - almost 80% of people recycling e-waste used a personal vehicle, while about 10% used public transit - people who did not recycle e-waste were more likely to be above the age of 50 than those who did (50% vs 32%) - people who recycled e-waste were more likely to be aged 21-29 than those who did not (16% vs 4%) - people who reported not recycling e-waste were more likely to be female, and people who recycled e-waste were more likely to be male. - of people who recycle e-waste, 43% used a site finder like E-Cycle, 38% learned from a government website, 34% from a store/company website, 3% from word of mouth, and 24% from visiting a site.

-  For the most populated portions of Grant County collection services are accessible and for the least populated portions, they are not accessible and convenient.
-  The MMFA was very helpful with assisting our local government to recycle or safely dispose of a backlog of E-Waste. Ultimately, we delivered it directly to SBK Recyclers through a direct City to business transaction. There are (2) locations for E-Cycle recycling in Clallam County; a Goodwill in Sequim and one in Port Angeles. We often get residents saying that they were refused or unable to recycle; but it's hard to know whether it was due to limited hours (Covid/short staffing seemed to impact); incorrect item or other barriers. The local Kiwanis Club has executed a number of recycling/disposal E-waste events that take everything and deliver it to SBK Recycling. E-Cycle items get thrown in with non-accepted items, including rechargeable phones. Seems to fill a gap as demand at events was high and more are planned.
-  Yes. We are always hoping for additional recycling locations in Kirkland, though. Pacific Power Batteries has been a good addition.

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:

-  In support of WMMFA's expressed interest in better reaching private schools, we sent a mailing out to private schools in Seattle recently, based on some messaging that WMMFA provided. We would be happy to collaborate on more such mailings, including to small businesses, but we would appreciate receiving a little more support from WMMFA on this, such as brochures or info cards that we could mail out along with the letter. And we'd like to have WMMFA cover mailing expenses, as part of their outreach budget. As in previous years, we'd like more information provided from WMMFA on specific details about how they are proactively reaching out to and collaborating with business associations on outreach to ensure that small businesses are made aware of the services they are eligible to access under the program. We are appreciative of the funding for joint outreach that WMMFA committed to SPU last year, and we intend to pursue similar funding in 2025. We believe that the campaign was successful in reaching residents and would strongly encourage WMMFA to consider proactively approaching other local governments with an offer of joint funding for a similar campaign, leveraging the assets that Seattle has already invested in developing (we spent about \$30,000 on developing and deploying the campaign, and E-Cycle WA provided an additional \$7,000 in funding for ad buys). We do not believe that passively waiting for local governments to approach it with campaigns to leverage the funding offer will yield significant uptake outside of Seattle and perhaps King County. Given the continued decline in tons, we believe WMMFA should be more proactive in promoting the program to residents and small businesses statewide, including but not limited to through the joint funding offering.
-  It is positive to see that WMMFA has increased their budget for outreach. We had wanted to apply for joint-outreach funding, but unfortunately did not have enough resources to do so. The waste management service providers such as WM, Republic Services and Recology as well as Amazon & Best Buy offer free recycling for many Covered Electronic Products. It would be great if WMMFA could partner with those organizations to do combined outreach and share data. Partnership with more junk haulers would also be beneficial. More than a quarter of residents in King County are foreign-born. Ensuring all communities are aware of E-Cycle WA might require additional outreach efforts.

- ♻️ It would be beneficial for us at City of Auburn to be notified when a new drop-off location/service provider is added in our city. We like to list providers on our website.
- ♻️ The City (Walla Walla) frequently receives requests from residents to join the program at the regional landfill. However, to participate, the City (Walla Walla) would require additional cost-sharing.
- ♻️ The public seems to know about our location and service.
- ♻️ Offering collection events in the areas furthest away from the populated areas (Grant County) would be beneficial. Funding to pay for the publicity and manpower would probably be an issue though.
- ♻️ Would be good to know as a solid waste educators/servicer if Goodwill/E-Cyclers are supported, still operating, etc. A check in. There's a disconnect between them (esp as a corporate entity) and the entities that promote the program (local governments). Peripherals and ECycle non-accepted items have a demand for recycling. Kiwanis has stepped in to fill that gap; Home Depot does limited rechargeable batteries (different program I understand, yet similar when coming from phones, etc.). Again, there are gaps in information (what Home Depot actually accepts) and I'm also curious how "rogue" collection events are doing in the effort to address E-waste.
- ♻️ We heard feedback that Goodwill can be inconsistent with their acceptances. Have recommended Pacific Power Batteries as another drop off. Would appreciate additional opportunities for drop off locations as well, perhaps something closer to Houghton/Bridle Trails.

4. Did you know that local governments must promote the E-Cycle WA program (per WAC 173-900-980(4)) and that this outreach is an eligible activity under LSWFA grants? This year, the MMFA has launched an online form to help better facilitate joint outreach projects at <https://ecyclewa.org/program-details/>. Briefly describe the E-Cycle Washington Program public outreach and education conducted by your agency/organization this year.

Responses:

-  As usual, 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. Our Beyond the Cart flier showing most common types of items for reuse, recycling, composting and proper disposal, including electronics and referral to E-cycle WA is translated into Amharic, Chinese, Oromo, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya and Vietnamese and can be seen on the Where Does it Go web page. We also provide handouts to customers at our transfer stations who bring in electronics or who ask about e-waste recycling options. Also, as noted in the previous question response, SPU sent letters out to private schools promoting E-Cycle WA. We also sent letters to junk haulers informing them of the opportunity to become collectors. Finally, and most significantly, we developed and deployed a social media campaign focused on TVs and promoting E-Cycle WA drop-off services. The campaign ran from late Nov 2024 through Jan 2025 and was, we think, quite successful, and something we plan to repeat in 2025. We are appreciative of the funding contribution from WMMFA in support of ad buys for that campaign and would like to see even more support in 2025.
-  Both our Solid Waste and Hazardous Waste websites inform residents and businesses of E-Cycle WA. Our Take it Back Network recyclers lists electronics recyclers and designates authorized E-Cycle WA collectors (<https://kingcounty.gov/depts/dnrp/solid-waste/programs/take-it-back/electronics.aspx>). Our What do I do with...? tool (<https://info.kingcounty.gov/Services/recycling-garbage/Solid-Waste/what-do-i-do-with/>) directs residents and businesses to E-Cycle WA's website. Our printed mailings (~100,000) for the four SWD-funded recycling events in unincorporated/underserved areas directs folks to E-Cycle WA's website. King County does not accept covered electronics in the garbage or at its transfer stations (<https://kingcounty.gov/en/legacy/about/policies/rules/utilities/put716pr>). Brochures are distributed at our transfer stations, when people bring in electronics for disposal, to direct them to collection sites and E-Cycle WA. KC SWD creates and publishes social



media posts about electronics recycling and E-Cycle WA. We help organize and promote recycling events that collect electronics. We visited 8 E-Cycle WA sites in King County (outside of Seattle) over the summer of 2024.

-  We advertise on our website and mail an annual hazardous waste newsletter to residents that includes E-Cycle Washington information.
-  Included additional information on the City solid waste webpage and October City newsletter mailed to all homeowners.
-  We have directions for using E-Cycle on our LSWDD website.
-  Grant County includes E-Cycle Washington education on its website and on recycling flyers. On the website there is a brief description of the program along with a link on how to recycle electronics. Recycling flyers are available on the website and handed out at the Grant County fair.
-  The City of Sequim promotes the E-Cycle Program on our website and to residents and businesses who contact us. LSWFA funding for our County is quite small and needed to also fund: SWMP update, MRW disposal, Organics, Recycling and HHW E&O; of course some is also dedicated to SWE. Sequim "competes" for formula funds with other cities and the county, as well as any other entities who have great projects that would be eligible.
-  Yes. We regularly promote in our annual guides (mailed to all residents) and in social media promotions. We are reminded that we should do more



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: 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 Responses	No Responses
Are businesses providing recycling in your community who were not providing that service before E-Cycle Washington?	8	1
Are people recycling their electronics now when they may have thrown them in the trash before the E-Cycle program?	6	2

Responses:






-  As noted last year, opportunities to access responsible recycling for covered products increased for our residents with the implementation of E-Cycle WA in 2009, and improved significantly for a number of years, resulting in more convenient access to collection and less burden on our local government to provide this service. However, as noted in the response to question 1, convenient access to collection has decreased substantially in recent years as more than 70% of sites closed, the number of collection sites is at an all-time low (lower than even the first year of the program), and the amount of CEPs showing up in the garbage is increasing. As a result, Seattle Public Utilities has begun providing special curbside collection service. This service fills the gaps in convenient collection not provided by the program but results in a burden on ratepayers once again. We continue to urge action by WMMFA to take voluntary measures to remedy this issue to keep covered electronics out of the waste stream and take responsibility for the costs of responsible collection and management.
-  E-Cycle WA has been a tremendous success and diverted more than 80,000 tons of electronics from the landfill. Besides the volume of materials, e-waste contains many hazardous substances such as lead, mercury and chromium. We aim to achieve zero waste of resources and enhance the environment through collaboration and innovation, which is why we would like to see all e-waste managed responsibly. Computers, TVs and other electronic devices are designed with little or no thought to recycling and are difficult to disassemble. Recovering the high-value recyclable materials and the toxic components from these devices when they are discarded is costly due to the amount of labor or expensive equipment required to separate out the recyclable materials. We appreciate that it is up to industry to finance these costs and figure out the most effective and responsible way of managing their own products at their end of life. There are businesses providing electronics recycling services that were not providing

that service before E-Cycle WA, but since 2016 more than half the collection sites in King County have now closed. We assume that people are recycling their electronics now when they may have thrown them in the trash before the E-Cycle program, but at the same time it does seem as if less people are recycling now compared to ten years ago as the amount of collected covered electronics has decreased and more electronics are going to landfill. From 2010 to 2022, the number of foreign-born King County residents increased by about 185,000 to 26% of the county's population. A lot of the residents that have moved to King County might not be familiar with the recycling options available.

-  This program has reduced the amount of illegally dumped electronics. It still occurs, but it is much less.
-  Yes, Pacific Power Batteries. Would love to see some solid waste composition studies to see how things have changed. I still have concerns that dumpster availability vs collection site access may mean that folks are still throwing away items unnecessarily.

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

Responses:

-  Given the continued decline of collection sites and tons collected by the program, paired with increasing prevalence of CEPs in the waste stream, we encourage the state to consider adjustments to the state law in order to ensure that the program delivers on the law's original intent -- keeping electronic products out of landfills and ensuring that producers of these products take responsibility for the costs associated with providing convenient and effective recycling for consumer electronics.
-  Besides the concerns regarding the decreasing amounts collected by E-Cycle WA and greater amounts of covered products are being sent to landfill, number of collection sites, awareness and outreach of the program, we have concerns about where the collected materials end up – particularly the plastics. We have noticed that 4 out of the 5 processors are sending plastic from e-waste to Malaysia. We do not want to contribute to greater burdens on vulnerable populations and communities due to waste exported from King County. We would also like to see greater repair and reuse of electronic products to bridge the digital divide and reduce waste. Finally, there are many other types of electrical and electronic products, e.g., printers, battery containing products, computer peripherals, etc., that are not covered by E-Cycle WA and should be managed more responsibly. The Dept of Ecology and / or WMMFA should look into how all e-waste can be managed responsibly through a product stewardship / extended producer responsibility program, so that these products do not end up in landfills or incinerators and are instead repaired and reused, and their valuable resources are recycled.
-  Additional cost-sharing would encourage more cities to participate.
-  It's a great service for the community to keep used electronics out of landfills.
-  Would love to see more promotion done by WMMFA and more activation of new locations.

Summary

Ecology continues to work with the Materials Management & Financing Authority (MMFA) 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. Common suggestions include increasing program promotion, collection sites, and accepted devices.

Public outreach and education about the availability and benefits of the program is a priority for Ecology and the MMFA. Opportunities to increase awareness are explored throughout the year. In 2024, E-Cycle WA was advertised through print media, signage, on social media platforms, and through in person outreach efforts. Read the MMFA annual report Education and Outreach section for more details, <https://ecology.wa.gov/getattachment/a3511690-56e6-4ce9-b8d5-4b49b9fdead2/2024-WMMFA-v2-Annual-Report-04-21-2025.pdf>.

Additional 2024 outreach throughout the year included:

- Tabling at the state Capitol Campus.
- Tabling in Cle Elum at an Earth Day event.
- Tabling at the state Small Business Fair.
- Tabling at a small, diverse, and veteran-owned businesses conference.
- Bilingual ad in the Central Washington State Fair guide.
- Bilingual ads placed in the Yakima Valley Business Times.
- E-Cycle WA was promoted at the TRENDS Property Management Tradeshow.
- Outfield sign at Walla Walla Sweets baseball games.

Ecology's outreach in 2025 will include participating through community partnerships and eleven months of a six-location billboard campaign. The program will again partner with the Walla Walla Sweets to provide outreach to the community. The MMFA's joint outreach funding program also remains available to local governments.

The MMFA will continue collaborating with local governments to identify suitable collection sites and organize collection events. Each county and city with a population of 10,000 or more is required to have a collection site. Currently, more than 200 collection sites and events are available statewide, exceeding the 106 required. Site availability is a challenge as businesses close, but the MMFA remains focused on establishing permanent sites and hosting events.

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

