

The Scrap Recycling Industry: **Electronic Scrap**

Electronics recycling today is a **rapidly growing segment** of the private-sector scrap recycling industry.

Electronics recyclers provide comprehensive recycling operations, including logistics (e.g., collection and transportation), data security, demanufacturing, and the manufacturing of specification grade commodities from the electronic products. Recyclers make their living scrubbing and reselling hard drives. They test and then resell cell phones, monitors, and CPUs that are in good working order. And they use machinery and equipment to shred or otherwise process electronics to extract the various commodities that are contained in electronic equipment—including **steel, aluminum, gold, silver, titanium, copper, nickel, plastic, and glass**—for use as valuable raw material feedstock in the manufacture of new products.

The use of recycled materials recovered from electronics to manufacture new products sustains the earth's natural resources. At the same time, it conserves impressive amounts of energy in the manufacturing process, significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions from those facilities.

Approximately 2.8 billion pounds (1.4 million tons) of electronic equipment was recycled in 2006, including **65 million units of computer equipment (CPUs, monitors, and printers)**. The electronics recycling process yielded 1.3 billion pounds of recyclable materials, more than half of which were metals. Consumer electronics alone are now considered to be approaching more than 3 million tons generated annually.

Scrap recycling is a vibrant industry with strengths and capabilities that will be used to build a **viable, long-term infrastructure for electronics recycling**.



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Institute of
Scrap Recycling
Industries, Inc.

Voice of the Recycling Industry

THE ELECTRONIC SCRAP INDUSTRY

Scrap is not waste. Recycling is not disposal. Obsolete electronics are products that contain marketable scrap commodities traded in the global market.

Responsible manufacturing begins with Design for Recycling®, and results in better solutions to the environmental challenges faced at each stage of a product's life.

Scrap commodity markets are best governed by traditional laws of supply and demand.

Financing mechanisms should only be used to stimulate the recycling of scrap electronics until the markets for those materials are economically viable.

A portion of any fees generated should be spent to develop end-use consumer markets for electronic commodities, such as plastics and glass.

Obsolete recyclable electronics that can be safely and economically recycled should be banned from disposal.

