



As You Sow



Planting Seeds for Social Change

Best Buy Offers E-Waste Recycling Nationwide!

In response to shareholder pressure from As You Sow (AYS), Best Buy, the largest U.S. electronics retailer, began to offer e-waste recycling, mostly for free, at all 1000+ stores in late February.

Best Buy made progress towards this goal last year. After AYS filed a shareholder proposal that was later withdrawn, Best Buy agreed to a pilot take back project at 100 stores in three regions last June. The pilot was a great success, according to the company, and led to the planned roll out of a nationwide system. Most electronics will be accepted for free, but TVs and CRT monitors will be charged a \$10 fee. However, that fee will be partly offset by a \$10 gift certificate given to customers.

“This is a great victory for our Sustainability Initiative,” said Conrad MacKerron, As You Sow’s Program Director, who leads the dialogue with Best Buy. “This will keep millions of old TVs out of landfills and provide a model for other electronics retailers to follow.” However, there are still important issues to address. Best Buy is bearing the short-term cost of electronics recycling, but electronics manufacturers need to take eventual responsibility. Additionally, AYS will press Best Buy to ensure its vendors bar hazardous components from export to developing countries. Activist groups have uncovered unsafe e-waste dumping and processing sites in China and Nigeria. AYS continues to dialogue with Wal-Mart to enact similar e-waste recycling programs.