

NEWS

you can use



Texas Commission on Environmental Quality ♦ MC-113 ♦ PO Box 13087 ♦ Austin TX 78711-3087

JANUARY 2006

E-Waste Growing

Texans are becoming more and more dependent on electronic products. Computers, cell phones, televisions, and other electronic products are a rapidly growing part of our lives. As technology advances, making new products obsolete in just a few years, these products have also become a rapidly growing part of our waste. This trend will accelerate in the near future, as households convert to high-definition and digital televisions, and the costs and the potential environmental hazards of disposing of e-waste continue to grow.



According to the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, approximately two million tons of used electronics, including computers and televisions, are discarded each year.

Preventing waste in the first place is usually preferable to any waste management option, including recycling. You can help by becoming an educated consumer, user, and recycler of

electronic products. If you must dispose of electronic equipment, it is important to know how to do it legally and responsibly, including:

- Buy electronics that have environmentally preferable attributes. Look for electronics that:
 - Contain fewer toxic constituents.
 - Use recycled materials in the new product.
 - Designate the energy-efficiency rating.
 - Specify they're designed for easy upgrading or disassembly.
 - Offer leasing or take-back options.
- Upgrade, repair, or refurbish your equipment so you can continue to use it.
- Donate your old electronics to a charity for reuse.
- Drop off your old electronics at a local computer- and electronics-recycling event.

To locate a recycler in your area, check with your local solid waste department, or you can call 1-800CLEANUP or visit www.1800cleanup.org.

Energy Hog Campaign Under Way

The Alliance to Save Energy promotes energy efficiency worldwide to achieve a healthier economy, a cleaner environment, and a greater energy security. To raise awareness of the benefits of residential energy efficiency, the Alliance has teamed up with the AD Council to spearhead a national, public service advertising (PSA) campaign. The campaign's "dastardly spokeshog"– the *Energy Hog*, inspires families to



make energy improvements to reduce home energy bills. The target audience is children eight to thirteen years old, and adults.

The Energy Hog Challenge is a fun way to educate children about how they use energy in their homes and how to become responsible, smart energy users. It can be adapted by educators for younger and older students. The campaign focuses on saving energy at home through family-oriented activities. As students become aware of the ways energy is used and how it can be saved at home, they can expand that awareness to their schools. To download a copy of *The Energy Hog Challenge*, or to find out more information about the campaign, of which Texas State Energy Conservation Office is a sponsor, visit www.energyhog.org.

Energy Tips Available

The U.S. Department of Energy works to ensure secure, reliable, and affordable energy supplies that support a growing economy and protect the environment. *Energy Savers* is a booklet providing homeowners with tips for saving energy and money at home. By following just a few of the simple tips, you can make your home more comfortable and easier to heat and cool, while saving money. There are even tips for using clean, renewable energy to power your home. To view a copy of the booklet and to order, visit www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/tips/index.html.

Second Lone Star Leader Approved

The Lower Colorado River Authority's Thomas C. Ferguson Power Plant, a gas-fired plant in Marble Falls, is the second site to be approved as a Lone Star Leader in the TCEQ's CLEAN TEXAS, CLEANER WORLD program. To be approved as a Lone Star Leader, three TCEQ staff members performed a rigorous on-site audit of the site's environmental management system (EMS), which demonstrated Ferguson's commitment to environmental performance.

As a member, Ferguson Power Plant is also required to make two environmental improvements that go beyond compliance with environmental laws. Over the next three years, the site has committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to preserve nearly 311,000 additional acres of habitat.

As a reward for its environmental leadership, the Ferguson Power Plant is eligible for regulatory benefits such as reduced reporting, an improved compliance history score, and assistance with innovative projects, all of which cut paperwork, increase efficiency, and help Leaders focus on environmental improvements.

For more information about CLEAN TEXAS, CLEANER WORLD, visit www.cleantexas.org or contact the TCEQ Small Business and Environmental Assistance division at 512/239-3100.

TCEQ Offers Internship Program

The TCEQ Mickey Leland Environmental Internship Program was established in 1992 by the Texas Water Commission, a predecessor agency to the TCEQ. The program was established in partnership with the Texas Air Control Board, Texas Water Development Board, Texas General Land Office, Texas Chemical Council, Texas Council of the American Electronics Association and numerous private corporations. The program provides paid summer internship opportunities for minorities, women, and economically

disadvantaged students pursuing environmental, engineering, science-related, and public administration studies at universities and colleges.

The purpose of the program is to expose undergraduate and graduate students to environmental issues and professional opportunities. To learn more about the program and how to apply, visit http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/pubs/gi/gi-296.html.

Emissions Inventory Workshop Scheduled

To help companies new to the emission-inventory process, the TCEQ will hold a workshop in the Dallas-Fort Worth area on February 7, 2006, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Irving. For more information, visit <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/assets/public/admin/calendar/events.html>.

Texas Country Cleanups Planned for Southeast Texas

Rural Texans may bring their properly rinsed empty pesticide containers, used oil, filters, and batteries to the following locations in February:

City	Date
Columbus	2/06
El Campo	2/07
Bay City	2/08
Cuero	2/09
Luling	2/10

For more information on proper disposal and the sites, visit http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/assistance/TXcountry/tx_centry.html.

You are currently on our subscription list to receive the monthly newsletter, *Environmental News You Can Use*. Instead of receiving the paper copy in the mail, you now have the option of receiving e-mails from us when we post the latest issue in PDF format on our Web site at www.tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/pubs/pd/pd-025.html.

If you would prefer the e-mail instead of the printed copy, please e-mail us at educate@tceq.state.tx.us. Be sure to let us know the name your subscription is under and the e-mail address you would prefer us to send to, if different from the one you use to contact us.

The TCEQ is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. The agency does not allow discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation or veteran status. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this document may be requested in alternate formats by contacting the TCEQ at 512/239-0028, Fax 512/239-4488 or 1-800-RELAY-TX (TDD), or by writing P.O. Box 13087, Austin, TX 78711-3087.