Recycling Old Computer Equipment

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- Sep 20, 2011
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Old Computers - by eurleif

You must take precautions when getting rid of an old computer. Recycling is a good choice.

There are many things that you can do to make your home office greener. You can reuse paper or use both sides when you print. Keep your old home office supplies like file folders or binders, and reuse them. But, you are still going to need to buy new office equipment no matter how much you conserve here. You can't, however, just toss that computer into the trash with yesterday's garbage. Some of the components that comprise office supply equipment are harmful to the environment, especially when the parts corrode and the hazardous material leaches into soil or water

Luckily, there are plenty of programs popping up that now allow you to either recycle or donate older computer equipment. The first step when considering getting rid of your computer equipment is to think about donating it. Many of us buy newer equipment for faster modems or to get flat screen monitors when the older equipment is still useable. You can contact local organizations, such as the Salvation Army, to see if they will accept these items. This will allow lower-income families the opportunity to purchase your home office equipment.

You may also be able to donate these items to schools as well. The 21st Century Classrooms Act allows companies to donate their used equipment to both public and private schools, which make this also a tax write off. Before you donate the items, you will need to find out what the organization's minimum requirements are, i.e. processor speed and operating system. If the item is older than the minimum requirements, the organization either might not accept it or charge a fee.

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Skip the Landfill and Recycle Some Parts

If the office supply equipment, however, does not work, you should look into recycling it. Over a thousand municipalities around the country are now offering to take your computer and electronic equipment as part of their hazardous material recycling. There may be a drop-off center, recycling company or possibly your local electronics dealer that will take back the equipment. There, however, might be a fee involved and usually this fee is less than \$20.00 per item.

One way to maybe some money when recycling is to go through a manufacturer that has end-of-life recycling. And, since this is part of the offerings from the corporation, it's usually free. You only have to pay for the postage to send the item back.

Buying Green

Another way to "go green" with office electronics is to buy green in the first place. Manufacturers are now offering electronics that contain environmentally-friendly or recycled programs. And, many have the take-back options; something that you should look for before you buy the equipment.

More on this topic

- Beyond Glass, Aluminum and Paper
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- Green Business Tips: Office Waste Recycling For The Environment

When you go to buy a new piece of equipment, you should look for some of the following on the label:

- · Contains recycled parts.
- · Energy efficient.
- · Contains fewer toxins.
- · Have take-back options.
- · Can be upgraded.

The Environmental Protection Agency has lists on where you can recycle your products. To find one in your area, go to: http://www.epa.gov/waste/conserve/materials/ecycling/donate.htm.

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