

Electronics Challenge

Tiers of Participation

The Environmental Protection Agency's SMM Electronics Challenge has a tiered structure (Bronze, Silver and Gold). This structure reflects the need for flexibility and recognizes differences in business models, organizational sizes and levels of leadership.

Participants may join at the level that best suits their organization, experience and abilities. The tiers become progressively more comprehensive and the Silver and Gold tiers encompass the requirements of each of the previous tiers.

Overview



Entry-level status designed for organizations without existing collection programs or with nascent programs.



Mid-level status designed for organizations with modest collection programs.



High-level status designed for organizations with exemplary, well-developed collection programs.



CHANGING HOW WE THINK ABOUT OUR RESOURCES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

Reporting Requirements for ALL Challenge Participants & Tiers

- Bronze participants send at least 90% and Silver and Gold participants send 95-100% of all used electronics collected to a third-party certified recycler by the end of the baseline year of participation.
- Strive to send 100% of used electronics collected from all collection streams (e.g., consumer, warranty and return, business-to-business and internal equipment) to recyclers or refurbishers certified to a third-party certification program.
- Submit baseline data within six months of registration.
- Submit annual data to EPA via Re-TRAC Connect.
- Post goals and data on the participant's website using a template provided by EPA.
- Increase the total amount of used electronics collected for reuse and recycling from the previous baseline or annual total. If an increase is not possible, explain why it is not possible.
- Publicly post the current year's goals for education and outreach. Specifically, elaborate on:
 - Efforts to communicate to and educate the public on the safe management of used electronics through the third-party certified recycling; and
 - Efforts to provide the public with specific, local collection opportunities that use third-party certified recyclers.
- Provide for policies that favor recycling and reuse of electronic equipment and/or components as opposed to energy recovery, incineration, or land disposal.

Bronze, Silver and Gold Tiers

Differences between tier requirements are in red text. The silver tier will include all Bronze requirements and the Gold tier includes all of the Bronze and Silver requirements.

*All quantitative data reported in tons.

Bronze Tier

Basic Challenge Requirements

- Send at least 90% of all used electronics collected to a third-party certified recycler by the end of the baseline year of participation in the SMM Electronics Challenge.
- Strive to send 100% of used electronics collected from all collection streams (e.g., consumer, warranty and return, business-to-business and internal equipment) to recyclers or refurbishers that have been certified to a third-party certification program.
- Submit baseline data within six months of registration.
- Submit annual data to EPA via Re-TRAC Connect.
- Post goals and data on the participant's website using a template provided by EPA.
- Increase the total amount of used electronics collected for reuse and recycling from the previous baseline or annual total. If an increase was not possible, explain why not.
- Publicly post the current year's goals for education and outreach. Specifically, elaborate on:
 - Efforts to communicate to and educate the public on the safe management of used electronics through the third-party certified recycling; and
 - Efforts to provide the public with specific, local collection opportunities that use third-party certified recyclers.
- Provide for policies that favor recycling and reuse of electronic equipment and/or components, over energy recovery, incineration, or land disposal.

Bronze Tier

Reporting Requirements

- Total amount collected for reuse and recycling (including consumer, warranty and return, business-to-business and internal equipment, and electronics collected and/or purchased to meet state take-back laws)
- Percentage of total sent to third-party certified recyclers.
- Participants are required to post total weight sent to third-party certified recyclers with the intent to increase collection each year. If an increase is not achieved, explain why.
- List the names and locations of all third-party certified recyclers used (note: participants must report this information to EPA via Re-TRAC Connect, but have the option of reporting this information publically in the SMM Electronics Challenge template).
- Education & Outreach: List and describe public education and outreach activities on the safe management of used electronics and available collection opportunities.
- Describe policies that favor recycling and reuse of electronic equipment and/or components, over energy recovery, incineration, or land disposal.
- Provide the website where Challenge data and commitments are posted.

Silver Tier

Basic Challenge Requirements

- **Send at least 95% of all used electronics collected to a third-party certified recycler by the end of the baseline year of participation in the SMM Electronics Challenge.**
- Strive to send 100% of used electronics collected from all collection streams (e.g., consumer, warranty and return, business-to-business and internal equipment) to recyclers or refurbishers that have been certified to a recognized third-party certification program.
- Submit baseline data within six months of registration.
- Submit annual data to EPA via Re-TRAC Connect.
- Post goals and data on the participant's website using a template provided by EPA.
- Increase the total amount of used electronics collected for reuse and recycling from the previous baseline or annual total. If an increase was not possible, explain why not.
- Publicly post the current year's goals for education and outreach. Specifically, elaborate on:
 - Efforts to communicate to and educate the public on the safe management of used electronics through the third-party certified recycling; and
 - Efforts to provide the public with specific, local collection opportunities that use third-party certified recyclers.
- Provide for policies that favor recycling and reuse of electronic equipment and/or components as opposed to energy recovery, incineration, or land disposal.

Reporting Requirements

- Total amount collected for reuse and recycling (including consumer, warranty and return, business-to-business and internal equipment, and electronics collected and/or purchased to meet state take back laws).
- Percentage of total sent to third party certified recyclers.
- **Participants are required to post total weight sent to third-party certified recyclers with the intent to increase collection each year. If an increase is not achieved, explain why.**
- **[Optional] Total amount of used electronics collected and sent for recycling broken out by equipment, cell phones and other mobile devices and accessories.**

Silver Tier

- Report the total weight of electronics collected in states with take-back laws (including CA, MA, etc.) specifically collected to meet state Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws.
- Report the additional weight of used electronics collected for reuse and recycling in states with take-back laws above the amount required by the states.
- Report the total amount of used electronics collected for reuse and recycling in states without take-back laws.
- Report the weight of electronics collected, but not attributable to a specific state (ex: collected by mail-back program, regional agreement, or other method that does not allow tracking).
- Provide an explanation of the methodology used to determine the total amount of used electronics collected for reuse and recycling in states with and states without take-back laws. Provide any other useful information (e.g., did your company sell pounds to other OEMs? If so, how much?)
- After one year of participation, show an overall increase in the total amount of used electronics collected for reuse and recycling in at least one state without a take-back law. The electronics collected for reuse and recycling must come from real electronics collected in that state rather than “paper” electronics from other states. If participant is unable to show an increase, explain why.
- Answer one of the three questions that will provide information on upstream activities and innovations: 1) How do you influence supplier behavior (e.g., in the areas of materials selection, design for product longevity, reuse and recycling, energy conservation, end-of-life management and corporate performance)?; 2) How have you helped customers reduce their electronics packaging waste (e.g., through creative packaging design, innovative material choices, and better logistics)?; and, 3) How do you encourage customers (including large purchasers) to buy sustainable or “green” electronics products?
- List the names and locations of all third party certified recyclers used (note: participants must report this information to EPA via Re-TRAC Connect, but have the option of reporting this information publically in the SMM Electronics Challenge template).
- Education and Outreach: List and describe public education and outreach activities on the safe management of used electronics and available collection opportunities.
- Describe policies that favor recycling and reuse of electronic equipment and/or components as opposed to energy recovery, incineration, or land disposal.
- Provide the website where Challenge data and commitments are posted.

Gold Tier

Basic Challenge Requirements

- Send at least 95% of all used electronics collected to a third-party certified recycler by the end of the baseline year of participation in the SMM Electronics Challenge. **Provide a detailed explanation of the final destination of the electronics sent to non-certified vendors.**
- Strive to send 100 percent of used electronics collected from all collection streams (e.g., consumer, warranty and return, business-to-business and internal equipment) to recyclers or refurbishers that have been certified to a recognized third-party certification program no later than the third year of participation.
- Submit baseline data within six months of registration.
- Submit annual data to EPA via Re-TRAC Connect.
- Post goals and data on the participant’s website using a template provided by EPA.
- Increase the total amount of used electronics collected for reuse and recycling from the previous baseline or annual total. If an increase was not possible, please explain why not

Gold Tier

- Publicly post the current year's goals for education and outreach. Specifically, elaborate on:
 - Efforts to communicate to and educate the public on the safe management of used electronics through the third-party certified recycling; and
 - Efforts to provide the public with specific, local collection opportunities that use third-party certified recyclers.
- Provide for policies that favor recycling and reuse of electronic equipment and/or components as opposed to energy recovery, incineration, or land disposal.

Reporting Requirements

- Total amount collected for reuse and recycling (including consumer, warranty and return, business-to-business and internal equipment, and electronics collected and/or purchased to meet state take back laws)
- Percentage of total sent to third party certified recyclers.
- Participants are required to post total weight sent to third-party certified recyclers with the intent to increase collection each year. If an increase is not achieved, explain why.
- **[Required] Total amount of used electronics collected and sent for recycling broken out by equipment, cell phones and other mobile devices and accessories.**
- Report the total weight of electronics collected in states with take-back laws (including CA, MA, etc.) specifically collected to meet state Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws.
- Report the additional weight of used electronics collected for reuse and recycling in states with take-back laws above the amount required by the states.
- Report the total amount of used electronics collected for reuse and recycling in states without take-back laws.
- Report the weight of electronics collected, but not attributable to a specific state (ex: collected by mail-back program, regional agreement, or other method that does not allow tracking).
- Provide an explanation of the methodology used to determine the total amount of used electronics collected for reuse and recycling in states with and states without take back laws. Provide any other useful information (e.g., did your company sell pounds to other OEMs? If so, how much?)
- **After one year of participation, show an overall increase in the total amount of used electronics collected for reuse and recycling in two states without a take-back law. The electronics collected for reuse and recycling must come from real electronics collected in those states rather than "paper" electronics from other states. If participant is unable to show an increase, explain why.**
- **Due Diligence: Verify that your company conducts due diligence to ensure the certified recycler of first entry into the system, as well as vendors receiving materials after the initial certified recyclers (i.e., downstream vendors), are also certified to an established third-party certification standard or are also certified to an established third-party certification standard, or are examined by the company's auditors at least semi-annually to ensure safe management practices (Note: If a certified body conducts an annual audit, only one additional in-person or paper audit is required per year).**
- **Answer two of the three questions that will provide information on upstream activities and innovations: 1) How do you influence supplier behavior (e.g., in the areas of materials selection, design for product longevity, reuse and recycling, energy conservation, end-of-life management and corporate performance)?; 2) How have you helped customers reduce their electronics packaging waste (e.g., through creative packaging design, innovative material choices, and better logistics)?; and, 3) How do you encourage customers (including large purchasers) to buy sustainable or "green" electronics products?**
- List the names and locations of all third party certified recyclers used (note: participants must report this information to EPA via Re-TRAC Connect, but have the option of reporting this information publically in the SMM Electronics Challenge template).

Gold Tier

- Education & Outreach: List and describe public education and outreach activities on the safe management of used electronics and available collection opportunities.
- Describe policies that favor recycling and reuse of electronic equipment and/or components as opposed to energy recovery, incineration, or land disposal.
- Provide the website where Challenge data and commitments are posted.

Definitions

Accessories: Defined as headphones, speakers, CDs, printers, toner cartridges, USB sticks, keyboards, game system accessories, cables, chargers, and other small, miscellaneous items as defined by the Participant. It further includes any other or new (future) types of accessories to either the equipment or cell phone and other mobile devices equipment. The participant is welcome to provide a separate breakout of any of the items listed as accessories.

All Streams: Denotes used electronics collected for recycling or reuse from the various return streams used by the participant including: consumer take-back programs; asset recovery programs; retired lease returns; collection events; trade-in programs; etc.

Cell Phones & Other Mobile Devices: Defined as electronic equipment such as cell phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), organizers, tablets, e-readers, slates, smart phones, compact disc players, gaming systems, calculators, MP3 devices. It also includes any other or new (future) types of equipment that are designed primarily to store or convey information electronically and that are lightweight, mobile in design, and have a 4-inch screen or less measured diagonally.

Due Diligence: Defined as processes to ensure that the certified recycler of first entry into the system as well as vendors receiving materials *after* the initial certified recycler (i.e., downstream vendors) are also certified to an established third-party certified standard or are examined by the participant's auditors at least semi-annually to ensure safe management practices (Note: If a certifying body conducts an annual audit, only one additional in-person or paper audit is required per year). Due diligence ensures that company policies on the management of used electronics are followed by all vendors.

Equipment: Defined as electronics equipment such as central processing units (CPUs), desktops, laptops, televisions, printers, monitors, copiers, fax machines, scanners, imaging equipment, radios, tablets, e-readers, slates, netbooks, and heavy equipment such as servers. It further includes any other or new (future) types of equipment that are designed primarily to store or convey information electronically and have a 4-inch screen or larger measured diagonally.

Reuse: Denotes an electronics object, or component of an electronics object that is used again by a different owner either for its original purpose or for a similar purpose, without significantly altering the physical form of the object or material. The electronics object may be cleaned, repaired, or refurbished between uses.

Third-Party Certified Recyclers: For the purposes of the *SMM Electronics Challenge*, the term "recycler" denotes a refurbisher or recycler certified to a recognized third-party certified recycling program. Similarly, the term "recycling" encompasses recycling, refurbishment and reuse. Currently, Responsible Recycling Practices (R2) and e-Stewards[®] are the only recognized certification standards for recyclers. However, EPA may recognize additional standards at a later date.

Total Collected for Reuse and Recycling: The total amount of used electronics collected for reuse and recycling, including the amount sent to certified and non-certified recyclers. It can include company assets, business to business, warranty returns, and electronics collected and/or purchased to meet state take-back laws.