

# Electronics Retailers Recycling Report Card for: **Staples**



Staples earned the top score in our report card. It is one of the few retailers that has a real recycling program - they take back most categories of electronics (except TVs) for recycling, and you can bring them to any of their 1872 stores. This is partly because they are partnering with HP on this program. (We would like to see more recycling partnerships between retailers and manufacturers.) Being able to drop off used products for recycling is a crucial feature of a "real" recycling program, as most consumers will not mail back products for recycling. Also, Staples works with a recycler who is certified to the rigorous e-Stewards standard, which does not permit exporting e-waste to developing countries.

Grading Criteria	Max Points	Points Earned	Comments
<b>1. ELECTRONICS RECYCLING PROGRAM</b>			
1.1. Does the retailer have an ongoing year-round program to take back and <u>recycle</u> electronic products from consumers? (as opposed to occasional events or a trade in program)	1	1	They take back products for recycling at all Staple stores in the U.S.
1.2. Do they take back for recycling all the same product categories that they sell?	3	2	They recycle 12 of the 13 categories on our list - but not televisions. They do take monitors, which most other retailers don't take.
1.3. Do they offer physical collection sites (in stores or other locations) where they <b>collect all of the large electronic items</b> (categories other than phones and tablets) that they sell?	5	5	Limit 6 items per customer per day.
1.4. Do they have collection sites for e-waste recycling in every state they sell into?	5	5	They are in 48 states, and collect at all stores.
1.5. Is recycling free at the time of drop off?	3	3	
1.6. Secret programs - Is the recycling program a secret? No info on websites or in stores? This earns a deduction.	-10		
<b>Total this section</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>	
<b>TRANSPARENCY on volumes</b>			
<b>2. TRANSPARENCY.</b> Does the retailer publicly report on their takeback program every year, on their website, including:			
2.1. Total volume of equipment collected?	1	1	They publish volumes in their Sustainability reports
2.2. How much equipment was refurbished and reused? (This can include trade in programs.)	1	1	
2.3. How much equipment was recycled?	1	1	
2.4. How much ink and toner was recycled (if they sell printers)	1	1	
2.5. Total volume collected as a percentage of the total volume the retailer sold.	5	0	They don't report this.
2.6. Breakdown of specific materials ultimately recovered during recycling, including critical	1	1	While we were looking for a more detailed breakdown here, we gave them

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minerals, if any			credit for the following statement, since almost no other retailers address this important issue: <i>Through the recycling process, our partner ERI recovered several materials for recycling, including ferrous, non-ferrous and precious metals (approximately 60 percent of volume collected), plastics (26 percent), glass (5.5 percent), and other materials (8.5 percent), in 2012.</i>
<b>Total this section</b>	<b>10 pts</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>3. HOW MUCH IS COMING BACK?</b>			
3.1. How much total electronic equipment did the retailer take back in 2012 in the U.S. for recycling and reuse?	5	2	They collected 12.7 million pounds of electronics. That's 1.61 lbs per every \$1000 sold.
3.2. How much equipment was refurbished and reused?	4	0	Not much reuse - only 1 % by weight was refurbished and resold. No points.
3.3. How much equipment was recycled?	4	2	99% of 12.7 million lbs.
3.4. How much toner and ink recycled (if they sell toner/ink)?	4	4	Staples took back 72 million ink and toner cartridges in 2012, far more than any other retailer
<b>Total this section</b>	<b>17 pts</b>	<b>8</b>	
<b>RESPONSIBLE RECYCLING</b>			
<b>4. Responsible Recycling</b> We want to be sure that reuse and recycling is done responsibly, and that toxic e-waste isn't sent to developing countries where it can cause harm.			
<b>4.1. Public Export Policy.</b> Does retailer have a formal public policy (on website) for their recycling and trade-in programs that says that:			
4.1.1. All products or parts must be tested and found to be fully functional before being exported from the U.S. to developing countries	3	1	They have no specific corporate policy, but they use only e-Stewards, so they get partial credit here.
4.1.2. All hazardous materials <sup>i</sup> and components generated by downstream refurbishers and recyclers must be kept in developed countries throughout final disposition			
4.2. <b>Transparency.</b> Does company publicly disclose all their recycling and reuse vendors for their recycling and trade in programs?	3	3	They clearly disclose that they use ERI for recycling.
4.3. <b>E-Steward Certification.</b> 4.3.1. Are all of the company's recycling and reuse vendors handling electronics returned in the U.S. certified to the highest voluntary standard in the industry, the <i>e-Stewards Standard for Responsible Recycling and Reuse of Electronic Equipment</i> <sup>®</sup>	Max 10	10	They work with ERI, which is a certified e-Steward.
4.3.2. <b>Future certification.</b> If the answer to 4.3.1			

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above is “no,” has the company signed a pledge that by <u>[future date]</u> , all of their takeback and trade-in programs in the U.S. will work <u>only</u> with reuse and recycling vendors who are certified e-Stewards? All electronics returned in the U.S. will go only to certified e-Stewards for reuse, repair, or recycling.			
<b>Total this section</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>43</b>	
Link to information on retailer website: <a href="http://www.staples.com/recycle">www.staples.com/recycle</a>			

For an explanation of why each question is important, see our “[Criteria for Grading.](#)”

Grading Scale

A = 46-60

B = 31-45

C = 21-30

D = 11-20

F = 0 to 10

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<sup>i</sup> Hazardous materials as defined under International Law, established by the [Basel Convention](#), not the very narrow definition that the US EPA uses.