Green Times
Volume 2, Issue 1

Green Times

Electronic Waste—E-Waste How to Recycle Responsibly

Newsletter Mission:

The purpose of our newsletter is to keep our residents aware of Secaucus' recycling and sustainability goals, green tips and environmental achievements.

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Chances are you probably received some sort of electronic device over the holidays. But what do we do with the tablets, e-readers, cell phone chargers, video games, cameras, etc. that we are replacing?

Electronic Waste or E-Waste has become a big environmental problem. In fact, as of January 1, 2011 – a disposal ban on computers, laptops, monitors, portable computers and televisions went into effect for all of Hudson County. Most of our gadgets end up in landfills where toxic materials and pollutants can leach into the ground and not only pollute the ground but eventually find their way into our rivers and water supplies.

The amount of E-waste is growing every year. By some estimates, consumers threw away 92 billion pounds of used electronics last year, up from 87.7 billion pounds the year before. These items – cables, cameras, computers, DVD players, keyboards, laptops, mice, monitors, printers, scanners, stereo components, telephones, cell phones, televisions, VCRs – can be recycled, but how do we dispose of these electronics responsibly?

We are fortunate in Secaucus to have several options to dispose of electronic waste and have it recycled in a responsible manner.

1. Secaucus DPW for Big Electronics -
If you live in a single family home in town, Tuesday is the designated pickup day for large electronic items. Just place your item curbside on Tuesday morning, and the Secaucus Department of Public Works (DPW) will pick it up for you. If you live in one of the condominium communities in town, call the DPW at 201 330-2080 to schedule a pick up or you can take your item directly to them at 370 Secaucus Road. Items picked up or dropped off at the DPW are then responsibly recycled via our partnership with the Hudson County Improvement Authority (HCIA).

2. Small Electronics & Batteries – Check out the **Big Green Boxes** which have been placed at the Library, Town Hall, the Recreation Center, the High School, both elementary schools and the DPW garage. These boxes are specifically for the purpose of recycling batteries – Alkaline, NiCd, NiMh, Lead, Silver, Mercury, Lithium; and small electronics – cell phones, chargers, calculators, cameras, PDAs, and tablets. Place your items in a zip lock bag and drop them off.

3. Morgen Industries – A recycling company for the tech industry, Morgen Industries de-manufactures and recycles computers, printers and servers for businesses. Morgen Industries is a licensed recycling facility that is compliant with federal and state regulations. Fortunately they have a

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E-Waste Recycling *(continued)*

large service center in Secaucus at 701 Penhorn Ave.

Morgen Industries will take any large electronic item that you can haul over to them. They accept obsolete servers, monitors, circuit boards, fax machines, modems, laptops, keyboards, scanners, printers, copiers, computers, power cords cabling, cell phones PDAs and phone systems. Give them a call at 201 223-0072 to let them know you have items to drop off and bring them to the warehouse / docking area. Note hours: Mon—Fri, 9:00—3:00; Sat 9:00 –1:00.

If you have a small business and need to get rid of a number of old computers, printers, phone systems, etc., call Morgen and they will arrange a pick up for you.

4. Best Buy will accept your old or unwanted appliances in several ways.

Their **Recycling Kiosks** located right inside the front door are available to drop off inkjet cartridges, batteries, cell phone, CDs/DVDs, PDAs, smart phones, printers and small electronics.

The **Customer Service Counter** will accept most large electronics that you can carry in, including printers, tube TVs up to 32" and flat panel TVs up to 60". (*Note that the hard drive should be removed from any computer or laptop*).

Large Appliance & TV Recycling. Any large appliance - TV, refrigerator, washer/dryer, etc., will be removed free of charge from your home when a new product has been purchased and delivered by Best Buy.

Best Buy is committed to responsible recycling and will make sure all items are disposed of in an environmentally appropriate manner.

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Visit us on the Web!
www.secaucusnj.gov

K-Cups—A Brewing Problem

Even though K-Cups were originally designed for use in offices, almost one in three American homes now has a pod-based coffee machine. Last year, K-cups accounted for most of Keurig Green Mountain's $4.7 billion in revenue, five times higher than the year before!

The problem is that K-Cups are not recyclable and aren't biodegradable. In 2014, enough K-cups were sold that if placed end-to-end, they would circle the globe more than 12 times. Almost all of these K-cups ended up in landfills—all 13 billion of them—generating tons of plastic waste.

K-cups are made of plastic integrated with a filter, coffee grounds and a plastic foil cap. Most K-cups produced since 2006 will say they are recyclable, but that's only if a person is willing to disassemble each cup into paper, plastic, compost and metal components.

Even for people who are willing to take the time to separate the lid, remove the paper filter, and compost the grounds—recycling facilities are struggling with the cups falling through the sorting grates.

Keurig has pledged to create a fully recyclable version of the K-Cup by 2020. But that's ***five more years*** of this amount of waste.

The bottom line is that K-Cups are expensive, unsustainable, wasteful and environmentally irresponsible.

Now if we could only convince our own administration at Town Hall to stop using K-Cups! :(

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Secaucus is a Silver Certified Community

This newsletter is printed on 30% recycled paper.

Published by the Recycling and Environmental Department.

Sponsored by the Town of Secaucus, Mayor Gonnelli and Town Council.

GO GREEN SPOTLIGHT

- Check out the Environmental Department's re-vamped website page. We have updated the site and have included a brand new section called ***"Green Tips"*** which offers 12—month by month ideas and advice on how to Go Green in your life and home.
- Have you walked our recently completed **Secaucus Greenway** yet? This is a 1.6 mile trail designed for walking, running or biking. Just completed, it starts across from the ball fields on Mill Ridge Road, and continues along the Hackensack River all the way to the Extended Stay Hotel on Meadowlands Parkway. We have 1/4 mile markers to help you keep track of your progress and one day hope to have the Greenway extend all the way south to Laurel Hill Park.
- For 4 days, at the end of August, we held our very first **Environmental Summer Camp** for about 25 kids aged 8—12. We taught children the importance of our environment with hands on activities and presentations. There is limited availability and campers must sign up in advance.
- Did you notice the beautiful pictures scattered throughout this issue of Green Times? These are just a few of the entries submitted by Secaucus residents this past summer's on behalf of our **"Show Us Your Garden"** contest.

Check out our website to see all the pictures submitted this past summer.

We'd like to thank all the Secaucus residents who were kind enough to share their photos and show off their gardens. We encourage even more people participate next year.

Secaucus Go Green Mission...

Secaucus is committed to the protection and preservation of the environment and is dedicated to enhancing environmental sustainability within our town and the state of New Jersey. We understand the responsibility we have towards the planet and have adopted a policy that reflects this mission.