

Product Stewardship



What is product stewardship?

Product stewardship is an environmental management strategy that means that all parties involved in designing, manufacturing, selling and using a product take responsibility for environmental impacts at every stage of that product's life. The greatest responsibility lies with the entity that has the most ability to affect the lifecycle environmental impacts of the product.

What is the benefit of product stewardship?

Product stewardship encourages manufacturers, retailers and consumers to treat products as resources rather than waste, changing how they think about the products they make, buy and use.

Waste has changed from mostly mineral (coal ash) and organic (food and yard waste) to products.

Today 75% of our waste is from products and in Minnesota, that waste is increasing.

How can I support product stewardship?

The consumer and user of products has his/her part to play in the process. First, stay informed about the issues. Second, all purchasers and users are responsible for reducing the amount of toxicity and waste that result from their use and disposal of products, and for using products in a manner that conserves resources.

Recycle rechargeable batteries and cell phones— RBRC is a non-profit organization created by the rechargeable power industry and dedicated to the recycling of rechargeable batteries and old cell phones. For a listing of our collection sites call the consumer hotline at 1-800-8-BATTERY or check online at www.rbrc.org

Dispose of pharmaceuticals and sharps properly — DO NOT FLUSH PHARMECEUTICALS DOWN THE TOILET. Check out the webstream on pharmaceutical and sharps disposal at www.dakotavalleyrecycling.org

Recycle Electronics— The contents of electronic devices contain toxics that can cause environmental health risks when stored, landfill led or incinerated. Visit www.moea.state.mn.us/plugin/index.cfm to consider disposal options.

Cities and counties spend \$7 million each year to handle products that are a problem for waste systems, such as used motor oil, unused or old paint, fluorescent light bulbs, and old televisions.

Examples of Product Stewardship

Product stewardship requires manufacturers to share in the financial and physical responsibility for collecting and recycling products at the end of their useful lives. When manufacturers share the costs of recycling products, they have an incentive to use recycled materials in new products and design products to be less toxic and easier to recycle, incorporating environmental concerns into the earliest phases of product design. Here are some examples of this process:



RBRC was founded in 1994 by manufacturers of rechargeable batteries and battery-containing products — the batteries typically found in cordless power tools, cellular and cordless phones, laptop computers and camcorders. Manufacturers acted in response to mandated manufacturer responsibility requirements for nickel-cadmium (Ni-Cd) batteries, establishing a voluntary national program to collect spent rechargeables. RBRC has grown to over 300 licensees.



Members of the carpet industry have established a third-party organization known as **Carpet America Recovery Effort (CARE)**. CARE will focus on using market-based solutions for increasing the reuse and recycling of post-consumer carpet by:

- Enhancing the collection infrastructure for post-consumer carpet.
- Serving as a resource for technical, economic and market development opportunities for recovered carpet.
- Developing and performing quantitative measurement and reporting on progress toward the Negotiated Outcomes Goals.
- Working collectively to seek and provide funding opportunities for activities to support the Negotiated Outcomes Goals.



Sony Electronics Inc. partnered with Waste Management, Inc. to provide a free take-back of all Sony electronic products in Minnesota. The program has expanded to offer free recycling of consumer electronics in the U.S. Consumers can bring their unwanted Sony products to listed Waste Management eCycling locations: www.sonystyle.com/recycle.

“Taking back and recycling products helps Sony design future devices that cost less to manufacture and help save our precious natural resources. It's a win-win situation.”

Keep informed about the issues

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) - The MPCA is working with the Minnesota Legislature, state agencies and other stakeholders to promote the development of product stewardship policies: www.pca.state.mn.us

Dakota Valley Recycling

Website: www.DakotaValleyRecycling.org
Information Hotline: 952-895-4559
Direct Line: 651-675-5011

