

## **Free cell phone recycling at Multnomah County**

Cell phones in landfills leach toxic chemicals into our water and air. That's why Multnomah County has teamed up with The Wireless Alliance to offer free and convenient cell phone recycling with a "0-landfill" policy: All cell phones, chargers, batteries, and other components -- regardless of value -- will be accepted. Just look for the green and white box at all Multnomah County libraries.



### **Frequently asked questions**

#### **Why should I recycle my cell phone?**

Less than 1 percent of cell phones are recycled, and it is estimated that consumers have stored 500 million obsolete cell phones that await disposal. Cell phones in landfills can leach toxic substances into the water and air. Disposal of cell phones into solid waste in Oregon is a public concern from both health and resource-depletion perspectives.

Among the toxic metals and other materials present in cell phones, as reported by the EPA, are:

- Lead: can damage the central and peripheral nervous systems, blood systems, and kidneys;
- Chromium VI: can damage DNA and has been linked to asthmatic bronchitis; and
- Brominated Flame Retardants: act as endocrine disrupters and increase the risk of cancer of the digestive and lymph systems

#### **What happens when phones are recycled?**

Cell phones and accessories received in working order can be recycled and reused. If the cell phone is broken, but has useful parts, Wireless Alliance will take it apart and recycle the scraps. That includes the batteries, chargers and all accessories.

#### **Do the battery and SIM card need to be removed?**

Batteries are recycled and SIM cards are destroyed. For your own security, it is recommended that you remove your SIM card prior to recycling your phone. If you do not, however, Wireless Alliance will destroy it.

#### **Are there privacy concerns or risks that I may get phone bills from the next person who uses my old phone?**

As long as your phone has been deactivated from service, there are no security or privacy concerns. When your phone is refurbished, it will be completely cleared and reprogrammed, erasing any trace of your ownership.