

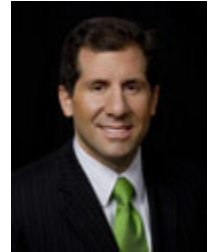
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Q&A: John Shegerian, Electronic Recyclers International

Posted By Dan O'Regan

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John Shegerian is the chairman and CEO of Electronic Recyclers International (ERI), an electronic waste collector and recycler that specializes in the environmentally-safe and socially- responsible dismantling of electronic items. Based in Fresno, California, ERI is fast becoming the leading recycler of electronics in North America. As MetroGreenBusiness.com has learned, Shegerian is driven by his commitment to innovate and develop companies that benefit and inspire others.



What sorts of electronics do you or don't yometu accept?

ERI accepts a long list of electronics, including: televisions, monitors, PCs and laptops, plasmas, LCDs, computer accessories, fax machines, stereo equipment, scanners, household appliances, network equipment, servers, telecom equipment, cell phones, DVD players, copy machines, medical equipment with no bio hazards, white goods, light bulbs, batteries, routers, hard drives, and circuit cards.

Items not accepted by ERI include hazardous materials, paint, tires, and chemicals. Basically, we accept everything with a cord and anything electronic; at some locations, we have a policy of no white goods-like dishwashers, fridges, etc.

Who do you normally accept e-waste from?

Everybody! Everybody is a client-the federal government; the state; and municipalities like Los Angeles, Fresno, and New York. We work with Homeland Security and the Department of Defense, down to homeowners, retailers like Best Buy, manufacturers like Samsung and Panasonic, and large waste companies.

How does Electronic Recyclers International work for individuals and businesses?

You go to our website, 1800-recycling.com, type in your zip code, then get information on a place where you can drop it off or pay to have someone come get it.

What sort of harm could e-waste cause to the environment if it's not recycled?

Needlessly filling landfills with electronics that can be 100% recycled. The harmful items in e-waste are lead, cadmium, beryllium, arsenic, and mercury.

What have you found to be the most rewarding aspect of your work?

We get to be in a sustainable business that makes great profits and employs over 400 people; we also get to do our fair share of saving the planet and preserving the environment, leaving a better legacy of environmental stewardship than we inherited.

What sorts of things are made from these recycled products?

Everything-plastic, glass, resmelted metals, sold internationally-can be reused in anything- hospitals, airports, infrastructure, roads-within developing countries. These materials are 100% recyclable, so all these materials that come to us go back into being reused. Reuse is the essence of recycling.

What's the most interesting thing you've ever recycled through your company?

Original Apple computers inscribed with the original serial numbers-historic electronics that are now collectibles. We saved the one that we thought was a piece of history and unique. It is in my partner's office.

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