



PRESS RELEASE



e-Stewards Electronics Recycler Certification Welcomes Endorsement by EPA

e-Stewards Prevents e-Waste from Being Exported to Developing Countries

February 8, 2016. Seattle, WA. A recent study by the US Environmental Protection Agency has given the [e-Stewards® Certification](#) for responsible electronics recyclers and refurbishers, along with the “R2” Certification, praise for “helping to improve the responsible management of used electronics in the United States.” The findings of the Implementation Study of the Electronics Recycling Standards: R2 and e-Stewards® released last week were based on numerous audit observations and stakeholder interviews.



EPA's First Formal Endorsement of e-Stewards Certification

"We are very pleased to get high marks for the implementation of a certification that goes above and beyond US law to support the consensus of countries across the globe that agree to ban the export of toxic electronic waste from developed to developing countries," said Mandy Knudtson, e-Stewards Business Director.

The e-Stewards program is especially proud of the EPA endorsement, because e-Stewards is the only electronics recycling standard and certification created by non-profit environmental organizations in concert with industry leaders. It is also the only standard supported by over 70 such environmental organizations and enjoys the support of over 50 e-Stewards Enterprise companies including: Samsung, LG, Bank of America, Boeing, Alcoa, Wells Fargo, Capitol One, Aflac, Raytheon, the Cities of Kansas City, San Francisco and Seattle, to name a few.

The e-Stewards Difference

The EPA study chose not to compare the actual requirements of the two Standards, but

only looked at how well they were implemented. But in fact the standards are very different. The e-Stewards Standard is the only one reviewed that adopts the Basel Ban Amendment – an international accord accepted by a consensus of 178 countries, which forbids the export of toxic waste of all kinds, including electronic scrap and waste from developed to developing countries. The e-Stewards standard also has the most rigorous provisions on recycler occupational safety and health, as well as the strongest measures to prevent consumer data from being released. Additional distinguishing characteristics of the e-Stewards certification can be found [here](#).

e-Stewards Fulfillment of EPA Recommendations

EPA also made four recommendations on matters where the certifications can improve. For each of these, the e-Stewards program can report the following steps already achieved:

1. Provide additional training and guidance materials to grow the knowledge base.

Already the e-Stewards program provides, via SAI Global, three very robust training programs (for lead auditors, EMS managers, and internal auditors) with a training manual rich in detail (over 400 pages for the lead auditors alone).

2. Provide regular updates to the Standards to ensure they continue to evolve alongside this rapidly changing industry. e-Stewards certification is uniquely able to make timely amendments to the Standard between official versions. These updates, called Sanctioned Interpretations are very important because they allow ongoing adjustments to what, EPA aptly notes is a "rapidly changing industry."

3. Increase audit time to allow for more thorough auditing of the Standards. Already, e-Stewards requires at least 50% more audit time than is required by the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) for the Environmental Management System Standard ISO 14001, which in its entirety is built into the e-Stewards Standard.

4. Explore and address perceived conflict of interest issues to enhance overall rigorousness of the audits. The e-Stewards certification institutes a number of measures to address the inherent conflict of interest of auditors who are ultimately receiving funding from the same companies they audit. The e-Stewards program has an unannounced inspection program known as, Performance Verification (PV), it conducts apart from the Certifying Body audits. Further it also conducts witnessed audits to oversee the certification program in total, including direct assessment of performance of auditors.

The e-Stewards program administrators are currently working on additional updates to the e-Stewards Standard and programmatic details to provide enhancements to the certification and adapt to the changing needs facing the industry in 2016.

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About e-Stewards® Certification

The e-Stewards® Initiative, administered by the business unit of the environmental organization, Basel Action Network, is a market-based solution to help individuals and organizations identify and promote electronics recyclers who ensure that used electronics

are managed with the highest standards of environmental and social responsibility. e-Stewards Certified Recyclers are audited and certified to ensure highest levels of responsibility and e-Stewards Enterprises are major corporations, municipalities, nonprofits or institutions that agree to make best efforts to make use of e-Stewards Certified Recyclers. For more information about the e-Stewards Initiative visit: www.e-Stewards.org

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