



E-Recycling Pilot Program Launched by USPS

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A pilot program launched this week by the U.S. Postal Service allows customers to recycle small electronics and inkjet cartridges by mailing them free of charge.

The "Mail Back" program helps consumers make more environmentally friendly choices, making it easier for customers to discard used or obsolete small electronics in an environmentally responsible way. Customers use free envelopes found in 1,500 Post Offices to mail back inkjet cartridges, PDAs, Blackberries, digital cameras, iPods and MP3 players -- without having to pay for postage.

Postage is paid for by Clover Technologies Group, a nationally recognized company that recycles, remanufactures and remarkets inkjet cartridges, laser cartridges and small electronics. If the electronic item or cartridges cannot be refurbished and resold, its component parts are reused to refurbish other items, or the parts are broken down further and the materials are recycled. Clover Technologies Group has a "zero waste to landfill" policy: it does everything it can to avoid contributing any materials to the nation's landfills.

It was this philosophy that won Clover the contract with the Postal Service, besting 19 other companies, said Anita Bizzotto, chief marketing officer and executive vice president for the Postal Service.

"As one of the nation's leading corporate citizens, the Postal Service is committed to environmental stewardship," Bizzotto said. "This program is one more way the Postal Service is empowering consumers to go green."

The free, postage-paid Mail Back envelopes can be found on displays in Post Office lobbies. There is no limit to the number of envelopes customers may take.

The pilot is set for 10 areas across the country, including Washington, D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles and San Diego, but could become a national program this fall if the pilot program proves successful.

The Postal Service recycles 1 million tons of paper, plastic and other materials annually. Last year, USPS generated more than \$7.5 million in savings through recycling and waste prevention programs. The Mail Back program is another example of the Postal Service's commitment to

"We know our customers are interested in real solutions for proper disposal of personal electronics," Bizzotto said. "Everyone from consumers to businesses to non-profit organizations use the mail, and the Postal Service works to manage resources wisely to minimize environmental impact."