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Electronics Recycling Coordination Clearinghouse Recommends Performance Measures for State Electronics Recycling Programs

Parkersburg, W.Va. – April 25, 2011 –The Electronics Recycling Coordination Clearinghouse (ERCC) is releasing today its set of “best practices” for measuring the performance of state electronics recycling programs. As the number of state, manufacturer, and retailer-sponsored recycling programs has grown, so too has the desire to compare the different approaches to determine which are the most effective.

The new ERCC publication, which was developed with input from public and private stakeholder members of the ERCC, addresses this gap by recommending a standard set of metrics that can be used to develop a coherent baseline set of data. The need for harmonized performance measures was identified as the top priority at a workshop held by the ERCC at the September 2010 E-Scrap Conference.

“With several states having two or more years’ worth of data about their program now available, it’s time to look at the real results using an apples-to-apples comparison,” said Jason Linnell, Executive Director of the National Center for Electronics Recycling (NCER), which manages the ERCC in conjunction with the Northeast Recycling Council (NERC). “Too often we hear judgments being made about the state programs based on anecdotal information or incomplete data. These new metrics, when adopted and incorporated, will reduce these types of misinformed conclusions,” said Linnell.

“While legislators and advocacy organizations have worked hard to develop effective electronics collection strategies, they have been challenged by a lack of data upon which to promote one strategy or another,” Lynn Rubinstein, Executive Director of NERC commented. “With the implementation of the performance measurement system recommended by the ERCC, we can expect to have more program strategies that mirror successful programs; resulting in more electronics recycling.”

The ERCC is a forum for coordination and information exchange among the state agencies that are implementing electronics recycling laws and all impacted stakeholders. The ERCC was launched in 2010. The new ERCC performance measures document identifies the preferred performance measures that should be tracked in electronics recycling programs as soon as possible. The measures are: 1) net pounds collected for recycling; 2) pounds collected for recycling per capita; 3) total number of permanent collection sites; 4) total number of mail-back programs and special collection events held annually; and 5) total weight recycled as percentage of weight collected. Basing evaluations of state programs on these baseline measures will provide a more level playing field for relative evaluation of program types and structures. ERCC recommends that collection of these data points begin in the current or next program year, and plans to post all available metrics on the ERCC website.

During 2011, the ERCC will release other documents with recommendations on various topics, such as product definitions and collector best practices which have been developed through member working groups. The ERCC is also planning to activate an online registration system for manufacturer and others and expand existing databases on the ERCC website.

To learn more about the ERCC, go to <http://www.ecycleclearinghouse.org>. To view the Performance Measures document, see:

<http://www.ecycleclearinghouse.org/documents/ERCC%20Best%20Practices%20for%20Performance%20Measures%20FINAL.pdf>

About the National Center for Electronics Recycling (NCER): The NCER is a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization based in Parkersburg, West Virginia that is dedicated to the development and enhancement of a national infrastructure for the recycling of used electronics in the U.S. For more information about the NCER, visit their website at www.electronicrecycling.org.

About The Northeast Recycling Council (NERC): NERC's mission is to advance an environmentally sustainable economy by promoting source and toxicity reduction, recycling, and the purchasing of environmentally preferable products and services. As part of its mission, NERC administers and supports several programs: The Toxics in Packaging Clearinghouse, the State Electronics Recycling Challenge, the Electronics Recycling Coordination Clearinghouse, and the Vermont Business Materials Exchange. For more information on NERC or any of their projects, call Lynn Rubinstein 802-254-3636 or visit www.nerc.org