

MEDIA RELEASE

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Valuable resources saved from the scrapheap - eDay aims to clean up the West Coast's e-waste

West Coast residents can dispose of their old PCs, computer peripherals, mobile phones and digital cameras at eDay on Saturday 12th September.

eDay, a free nationwide computer recycling event, is expected to divert over 1,000 tonnes of electronic waste (e-waste) from landfills nationally and 5.5 tonnes locally and will enable the recovery of valuable materials such as gold, copper and aluminium so they can be reused.

The region's first eDay – being held at Tai Poutini Polytechnic, Greymouth campus, Tainui St carpark on Saturday 12th September from 9am – 3pm – is an opportunity for residents to clear out their garages of unused computer equipment, old mobile phones and digital cameras, to be recycled for free.

“We're excited to be involved in the event and provide West Coast residents with the opportunity to recycle their old computer equipment and mobile phones in an environmentally sustainable way,” said Project Coordinator, Kate Campbell.

The drive-through event is part of a national eDay being held in over 40 centres across the country.

National Organiser and Chairperson of Computer Access New Zealand (CANZ), Laurence Zwimpfer, said e-waste is the fastest growing and one of the most challenging waste problems in the world and New Zealand is no exception; over 87,000 computer related items were diverted from local landfills at last year's eDay. "Computers contain many valuable resources which can be recovered and put to good use. Our aim with eDay is to educate New Zealanders about the benefits of recycling computers while providing convenient drop-off points for them to dispose of unwanted computer items in a safe way," said Mr Zwimpfer.

The annual eDay event is now in its third year and is the only national community-driven e-waste recycling event for dropping off computer items such as monitors, CPUs and printers, at no cost to the public.

CANZ advises people to wipe all data from computer hard drives as well as removable media such as floppy disks and PC cards before handing them over for recycling.

Only computer equipment, mobile phones and digital cameras can be recycled in the eDay collection. Other electronic equipment including televisions and stereos will not be accepted. "We know that TVs and other electronic equipment pose similar threats to our environment, but because of the huge variety in size and weight of this equipment, we don't think it is fair to ask volunteers to handle TVs," said Mr Zwimpfer. "The best advice we can give is for the public to hold onto their old TVs until sustainable solutions are available."

The event is supported nationally by The Ministry for the Environment, the 2020 Communications Trust and the Ministry of Education which funds the Computer Access NZ Trust. National transport operator KiwiRail and international e-waste recyclers CRTNZ are national partners again in 2009. Corporate sponsors include Meridian Energy, More FM, Dell, Canon, Printlink, The Laptop Company, Invo, Trade Me and NZICT.

People wanting to drop-off e-waste at the West Coast event can go to Tai Poutini Polytechnic, Greymouth campus, Tainui St carpark on Saturday 12 September from 9am to 3pm. For more information please contact the local coordinator, Kate Campbell on 03 769 9665 or email katec@tpp.ac.nz. For details of eDay 2009 sites across the country, visit www.eday.org.nz.

All equipment collected as part of eDay will be recycled by accredited international recyclers. Items in good condition can be donated to genuine charities through www.donatenz.com or sold on www.trademe.co.nz. Mr Zwimpfer said the very successful charity auction for antique and collectable computers organised in 2008 with the generous support of Trade Me means the auction will be held again this year. "There was a lot of nostalgia last year as many old-time computer users were able to get their hands on equipment that for many was their first computer," said Mr Zwimpfer.

eDay 2009 is a drive-through community event and is open to cars only. Businesses and schools or organisations with large quantities of e-waste are advised to visit www.eday.org.nz for alternate disposal options and more information about recycling options.

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The eDay 2009 logo is available for publication. High resolution photographs are available at www.eday.org.nz

For further information about eDay 2009 in your region, please contact:

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