



## Sprint, AT&T, Dell, Bridgestone Promote America Recycles Day

by Bart King | keywords: [articles](#), [Automotive](#), [Behavior Change](#), [Cause Marketing](#), [Collaboration/Partnerships](#), [Commitments & Goals](#), [Communicating Sustainability](#), [Consumer Perception/Behavior](#), [Environmental/Social Issues](#), [Waste Reduction/Reuse](#)



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November 15, 2012—Today is America Recycles Day and several brands are taking the opportunity to highlight their end-of-life, product-responsibility initiatives.

Wireless carriers Sprint and AT&T are separately addressing the issue of electronic waste — which is the fastest growing waste stream in the country due to the profligacy and short lifespans of electronic devices. Last year, manufacturers produced more than 1.68 billion wireless phones worldwide. In the United States alone, it's estimated that fewer than 10 percent of discarded mobile phones will be recycled.

This past week, **Sprint** highlighted its [phone buyback program](#) at the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race in Phoenix; launching a phone recycling pledge in which customers can win one of five rewards cards worth \$500; and posting a [video](#) online that illustrates how old cell phones can gain a "second life" while reducing the amount of electronic waste in the marketplace.

**GOOD FOR YOU** 💰

**Sprint Buyback** — the industry's best trade-in program — has been named **#1** in the industry two years in a row by Compass Intelligence.<sup>1</sup>

Sprint accepts **any phone** from **any carrier** and offers up to **\$300** in credit for eligible devices.

This year alone, we've given more than **\$75 MILLION** back to customers.

1. Based on an overall score among national carriers

[Click image for full infographic.](#)

Today, Sprint says four out of 10 customers who visit one of the company's retail stores participate in the buyback program, resulting in more than \$75 million going back into customers' pockets and contributing to the recycling of roughly 11 million devices in 2011 alone. Since 2001 the company has collected more than 4,000 metric tons of electronic waste — more than 40 million wireless devices — helping the company avoid an estimated \$1 billion in costs.

AT&T called in Guinness World Records to certify a record for the most wireless devices recycled in a single week — 50,942. However, Sprint is likely on the phone with the Guinness folks, because if you do the math on their 2011 collection figures, it averages out to 211,500 devices a week.

Nonetheless, AT&T reports that its Texas stores recycled the most devices (5,879), followed closely by California with 4,916 devices.

In 2011, AT&T collected approximately three million cell phones for reuse and recycling and, thanks in part to its new trade-in program, anticipates surpassing that number in 2012. By recycling these devices, AT&T customers avoided sending approximately 25,471 pounds of waste to landfills.

Earlier this year, AT&T launched a new in-store and online device trade-in program that helps consumers save their old phones from landfills while also having the choice to make a donation to a charity or earn AT&T credit for future purchases.

Computer maker **Dell** expanded its [recycling program with Goodwill stores](#), collecting used computers outside continental North America for the first time. Program leaders expect seven new drop-off sites on the Hawaiian island of Oahu to collect an annual 500,000 pounds of end-of-life electronics equipment, including computers, monitors, keyboards, hard drives and other accessories.

The Dell Reconnect program accepts all brands of used computer equipment in any condition and has recycled more than 253 million pounds of equipment since its launch in 2004.

Proceeds from the resale value of donations are returned to Goodwill Industries to support its mission of helping people with disabilities and disadvantages receive job training and support services, including child care, youth mentoring and transportation.

Tire maker **Bridgestone** highlighted its ongoing efforts to reach a goal of recycling one tire for every tire it sells in the U.S. Bridgestone Retail Operations announced that it now recycles 100 percent of tires at all of the Firestone Complete Auto Care's 2,200 stores.

Additionally, through a partnership with the nonprofit [River Network](#) and helping with other community clean-ups, Bridgestone has helped remove nearly 5,000 tires from the natural environment in the past eight months. Anyone planning a community cleanup event nationwide can [contact Bridgestone's One Team, One Planet program](#) to pick up and recycle any tire they find.

#### **The Next Step: Buy Recycled**

The **American Chemistry Council (ACC)** says almost all Americans now have access to recycling. The group released a survey today that finds more than 90 percent of people recycle to some degree in their daily lives. However, only 37 percent of respondents said they feel like they are "doing enough for the environment."

ACC's [Plastics Make it Possible](#) initiative is encouraging people to go one step beyond recycling to buying recycled products.

With the holiday retail season beginning, only 28 percent of people said they will look for gifts this year made with recycled materials. ACC notes that recycled plastics are used to make a wide range of consumer goods, such as clothing, kitchenware and garden tools, that can make eco-friendly gifts.

In 2012, recycled textile maker [Repreve](#) turned nearly one billion plastic bottles into yarn and fabrics used to make items for companies such as Patagonia, Ford Motor Company, and LK Life Khaki.

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