

AN ACT

relating to a program for the recycling of computer equipment of consumers in this state; providing administrative penalties.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Chapter 361, Health and Safety Code, is amended by adding Subchapter Y to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER Y. COMPUTER EQUIPMENT RECYCLING PROGRAM

Sec. 361.951. SHORT TITLE. This subchapter may be cited as the Manufacturer Responsibility and Consumer Convenience Computer Equipment Collection and Recovery Act.

Sec. 361.952. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Brand" means the name, symbol, logo, trademark, or other information that identifies a product rather than the components of the product.

(2) "Computer equipment" means a desktop or notebook computer and includes a computer monitor or other display device that does not contain a tuner.

(3) "Consumer" means an individual who uses computer equipment that is purchased primarily for personal or home business use.

(4) "Manufacturer" means a person:

(A) who manufactures or manufactured computer equipment under a brand that:

(i) the person owns or owned; or

(ii) the person is or was licensed to use, other than under a license to manufacture computer equipment for delivery exclusively to or at the order of the licensor;

(B) who sells or sold computer equipment manufactured by others under a brand that:

(i) the person owns or owned; or

(ii) the person is or was licensed to use, other than under a license to manufacture computer equipment for delivery exclusively to or at the order of the licensor;

(C) who manufactures or manufactured computer equipment without affixing a brand;

(D) who manufactures or manufactured computer equipment to which the person affixes or affixed a brand that:

(i) the person does not or has not owned; or

(ii) the person is not or was not licensed to use; or

(E) who imports or imported computer equipment manufactured outside the United States into the United States unless at the time of importation the company or licensee that sells or sold the computer equipment to the importer has or had assets or a presence in the United States sufficient to be considered the manufacturer.

(5) "Television" means any telecommunication system device that can ~~broadcast or~~ receive moving pictures and sound broadcast over a distance and includes a television tuner or a display device peripheral to a computer in which the display device~~that~~ contains a television tuner.

Sec. 361.953. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) Computers and related display devices are critical elements to the strength and growth of this state's economic prosperity and quality of life. Many of those products can be refurbished and reused, and many contain valuable components that can be recycled.

(b) The purpose of this subchapter is to establish a comprehensive, convenient, and environmentally sound program for the collection, recycling, and reuse of computer equipment that has reached the end of its useful life. The program is based on individual manufacturer responsibility and shared responsibility among consumers, retailers, and the government of this state.

Sec. 361.954. APPLICABILITY. (a) The collection, recycling, and reuse provisions of this subchapter apply to computer equipment used and returned to the manufacturer by a consumer in this state and do not impose any obligation on an owner or operator of a solid waste facility.

(b) This subchapter does not apply to:

(1) a television, any part of a motor vehicle, a personal digital assistant, or a telephone;

(2) a consumer's lease of computer equipment or a

consumer's use of computer equipment under a lease agreement; or

(3) the sale or lease of computer equipment to an entity when the manufacturer and the entity enter into a contract that effectively addresses the collection, recycling, and reuse of computer equipment that has reached the end of its useful life.

Sec. 361.955. MANUFACTURER RESPONSIBILITIES. (a) Before a manufacturer may offer computer equipment for sale in this state, the manufacturer must:

(1) adopt and implement a recovery plan; and

(2) affix a permanent, readily visible label to the computer equipment with the manufacturer's brand.

(b) The recovery plan must enable a consumer to recycle computer equipment without paying a separate fee at the time of recycling and must include provisions for:

(1) the manufacturer's collection from a consumer of any computer equipment that has reached the end of its useful life and is labeled with the manufacturer's brand; and

(2) recycling or reuse of computer equipment collected under Subdivision (1).

(c) The collection of computer equipment provided under the recovery plan must be:

(1) reasonably convenient and available to consumers in this state; and

(2) designed to meet the collection needs of consumers in this state.

(d) Examples of collection methods that alone or combined meet the convenience requirements of this section include:

(1) a system by which the manufacturer or the manufacturer's designee offers the consumer a system for returning computer equipment by mail at no charge to the consumer;

(2) a system using a physical collection site that the manufacturer or the manufacturer's designee keeps open and staffed and to which the consumer may return computer equipment; and

(3) a system using a collection event held by the manufacturer or the manufacturer's designee at which the consumer may return computer equipment.

(e) Collection services under this section may use existing collection and consolidation infrastructure for handling computer equipment and may include systems jointly managed by a group of manufacturers, electronic recyclers and repair shops, recyclers of other commodities, reuse organizations, not-for-profit corporations, retailers, recyclers, and other suitable operations.

If a manufacturer or its designee offers a mail-back system as described in subsection 361.955(d)(1), either individually or by working together with a group of manufacturers or by working with others, it shall be deemed to meet the convenience requirements of this section.

(f) The recovery plan must include information for the consumer on how and where to return the manufacturer's computer equipment. The manufacturer:

(1) shall include collection, recycling, and reuse information on the manufacturer's publicly available Internet site;

(2) shall provide collection, recycling, and reuse information to the commission; and

(3) may include collection, recycling, and reuse information in the packaging for or in other materials that accompany the manufacturer's computer equipment when the equipment is sold.

(g) Information about collection, recycling, and reuse on a manufacturer's publicly available Internet site does not constitute a determination by the commission that the manufacturer's recovery plan or actual practices are in compliance with this subchapter or other law.

(h) Each manufacturer shall submit a report to the commission not later than January 31 of each year that includes:

(1) the weight of computer equipment collected, recycled, and reused during the preceding calendar year; and

(2) documentation ~~verifying—certifying that~~ the collection, recycling, and reuse of that computer equipment in a manner that complies with Section 361.964 regarding sound environmental management.

(i) If more than one person is a manufacturer of a certain brand of computer equipment as defined by Section 361.952, any of those persons may assume responsibility for and satisfy the obligations of a manufacturer under this subchapter for that brand.

If none of those persons assumes responsibility or satisfies the obligations of a manufacturer for the computer equipment of that brand, the commission may consider any of those persons to be the responsible manufacturer for purposes of this subchapter.

(j) The obligations under this subchapter of a manufacturer who manufactures or manufactured computer equipment, or sells or sold computer equipment manufactured by others, under a brand that was previously used by a different person in the manufacture of the computer equipment extends to all computer equipment bearing that brand regardless of its date of manufacture.

Sec. 361.956. RETAILER RESPONSIBILITY. (a) A person who is a retailer of computer equipment may not sell or offer to sell new computer equipment in this state unless the equipment is labeled with the manufacturer's label and the manufacturer is included on the commission's list of manufacturers that have recovery plans.

(b) Retailers can go to the commission's Internet site as outlined in Section 361.958 and view all manufacturers that are listed as having ~~registered~~ a ~~compliant~~ collection program. Covered electronic products from manufacturers on that list may be sold in or into the State of Texas.

(c) A retailer is not required to collect computer equipment for recycling or reuse under this subchapter.

Sec. 361.957. LIABILITY. (a) A manufacturer or retailer of computer equipment is not liable in any way for information in any form that a consumer leaves on computer equipment that is

collected, recycled, or reused under this subchapter.

(b) This subchapter does not exempt a person from liability under other law.

Sec. 361.958. COMMISSION'S EDUCATION RESPONSIBILITIES.

(a) The commission shall educate consumers regarding the collection, recycling, and reuse of computer equipment.

(b) The commission shall host or designate another person to host an Internet site providing consumers with information about the recycling and reuse of computer equipment, including best management practices and information about and links to information on:

(1) manufacturers' collection, recycling, and reuse programs, including manufacturers' recovery plans; and

(2) computer equipment collection events, collection sites, and community computer equipment recycling and reuse programs.

Sec. 361.959. ENFORCEMENT. (a) The commission may conduct audits and inspections to determine compliance with this subchapter.

(b) The commission and the attorney general, as appropriate, shall enforce this subchapter and, except as provided by Subsections (d) and (e), take enforcement action against any manufacturer, retailer, or person who recycles or reuses computer equipment for failure to comply with this subchapter.

(c) The attorney general may file suit under Section 7.032,

Water Code, to enjoin an activity related to the sale of computer equipment in violation of this subchapter.

(d) The commission shall issue a warning notice to a person on the person's first violation of this subchapter. The person must comply with this subchapter not later than the 60th day after the date the warning notice is issued.

(e) A retailer who receives a warning notice from the commission that the retailer's inventory violates this subchapter because it includes computer equipment from a manufacturer that has not submitted the recovery plan required by Section 361.955 must bring the inventory into compliance with this subchapter not later than the 60th day after the date the warning notice is issued.

Sec. 361.960. FINANCIAL AND PROPRIETARY INFORMATION. Financial or proprietary information submitted to the commission under this subchapter is exempt from public disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code.

Sec. 361.961. ANNUAL REPORT TO LEGISLATURE. The commission shall compile information from manufacturers and issue an electronic report to the committee in each house of the legislature having primary jurisdiction over environmental matters not later than March 1 of each year.

Sec. 361.962. FEES NOT AUTHORIZED. This subchapter does not authorize the commission to impose a fee, including a recycling fee or registration fee, on a consumer, manufacturer, retailer, or person who recycles or reuses computer equipment.

Sec. 361.963. CONSUMER RESPONSIBILITIES. (a) A consumer is responsible for any information in any form left on the consumer's computer equipment that is collected, recycled, or reused.

(b) A consumer is encouraged to learn about recommended methods for recycling and reuse of computer equipment that has reached the end of its useful life by visiting the commission's and manufacturers' Internet sites.

Sec. 361.964. SOUND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT. (a) All computer equipment collected under this subchapter must be recycled or reused in a manner that complies with federal, state, and local law.

(b) The commission shall adopt as ~~mandatory~~ standards for recycling or reuse of computer equipment in this state the standards provided by "Electronics Recycling Operating Practices" as approved by the board of directors of the Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, Inc., April 25, 2006, or other standards ~~from a comparable nationally recognized organization issued from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, if available.~~

Sec. 361.966. FEDERAL PREEMPTION; EXPIRATION. (a) If federal law establishes a national program for the collection and recycling of computer equipment and the commission determines that the federal law substantially meets the purposes of this subchapter, the commission may adopt an agency statement that interprets the federal law as preemptive of this subchapter.

(b) This subchapter expires on the date the commission issues

a statement under this section.

SECTION 2. Section 7.052, Water Code, is amended by adding Subsections (b-1) and (b-2) to read as follows:

(b-1) The amount of the penalty assessed against a manufacturer that does not label its computer equipment or adopt and implement a recovery plan as required by Section 361.955, Health and Safety Code, may not exceed \$10,000 for the second violation or \$25,000 for each subsequent violation. A penalty under this subsection is in addition to any other penalty that may be assessed for a violation of Subchapter Y, Chapter 361, Health and Safety Code.

(b-2) Except as provided by Subsection (b-1), the amount of the penalty for a violation of Subchapter Y, Chapter 361, Health and Safety Code, may not exceed \$1,000 for the second violation or \$2,000 for each subsequent violation. A penalty under this subsection is in addition to any other penalty that may be assessed for a violation of Subchapter Y, Chapter 361, Health and Safety Code.

SECTION 3. Section 7.069, Water Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 7.069. DISPOSITION OF PENALTY. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), a [A] penalty collected under this subchapter shall be deposited to the credit of the general revenue fund.

(b) A penalty collected under Section 7.052(b-1) or (b-2) shall be paid to the commission and deposited to the credit of the

waste management account.

SECTION 4. (a) The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality shall adopt any rules required to implement this Act not later than July 1, 2008.

(b) This Act may not be enforced before January 1, 2009.

(c) The reports required under Sections 361.955 and 361.961, Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act, are not required to be prepared or submitted for the first time before the dates specified by those sections in 2010.

(d) Notwithstanding the 60-day limit under Section 361.959(d) or (e), Health and Safety Code, as added by this Act, a retailer may sell any inventory accrued before the effective date of this Act without incurring a penalty.

SECTION 5. This Act takes effect January 1, 2008.