

## TOXIC ELECTRONICS

### The PC way to trash your PC

ELECTRONICS can be green in three ways — either they are made with nontoxic methods, they use energy sparingly or they are recyclable/upgradeable. According to John Robson, a system integrator who runs the Web site [GreenElectronics.com](http://GreenElectronics.com), it makes sense to reduce waste by choosing quality, or “buying it right the first time.”

But what happens when it's time to haul your giant Sony Trinitron into the trash? The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) says electronic waste makes up 1 per cent of the volume of landfills but contributes 70 percent of the toxins, such as lead, mercury, cadmium, phosphors and flame-retardants.

It will be illegal for NYC residents to dispose of electronics in the trash as of July 1. However, this will not be enforced until the manufacturers have come to a settlement with the city about their role in collecting the waste. Options include the Lower East Side Ecology Center, which holds drop-off

A PC with low energy consumption, the **MSI Wind Top AE2220** runs at half the juice of an iMac. \$799 at [CompUSA.com](http://CompUSA.com); [us.msi.com](http://us.msi.com).



Earth photo: AP/Getty Images



recycling events all over the city.

“People bring those enormous old televisions or a 15 pound laptop that works but isn't internet ready,” says Caroline Kruse, the Ecology Center's development director. “We wish we could reuse more, but for now we're happy to take it for recycling.”

From there, it goes to companies such as WeRecycle! LLC and Sims Recycling Solutions, which guarantee nothing will end up in the landfill or be outsourced beyond the US, and that even leaded glass, plastics and heavy metals will reach appropriate recyclers.

Also, many manufacturers, like Dell, HP and Apple run mail-back programs, and retailers like Best Buy, Costco and Office Depot offer take-back programs.

LES Ecology Center's next recycling event is on Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., PS 29 schoolyard, Baltic Street, Brooklyn; [lesecologycenter.org](http://lesecologycenter.org)

— Joseph Gallivan

## The accidental eco-tourist



At Laguna Lodge, being eco-friendly does not mean sacrificing luxury or design.

Eco-tourism is the ultimate oxymoron. See the planet and ruin it in the process. There are no standards in place to rate a hotel in environmental standards and any ratings that are stated vary in meaning, in the same way quality star ratings do. So, any hotel can sling in the word “eco” even if all they do is use a few energy-saving light bulbs.

In Central America, where biodiversity means environmentally aware choices are key, the eco-lodge branding has become a staple, but at Laguna Lodge in Guatemala, the bar has been raised to a new level.

The Lodge is the project of Antipodean transplants Mayah and Jefferson “Jeffro” Dent, who have adopted as their mission a “tread lightly” ethic in the extreme.

Opening just over a year ago, the Lodge looks like it has stepped out of the pages of a chic design magazine. Furnishings and artwork are either antique or from local artisans. The building is made from locally quarried adobe clay bricks, native trees and stones washed down from the hillside. Palm and bamboo are from sustainable plantations on the Pacific coast. Solar power, lake irrigation, recycled glass, unbleached hypoallergenic bedding and low water use appliances are just the start of the eco-ethic.

“People are going to travel,” said Jeffro. “But here, they will have much less of an impact.”

— Carole Sovocool

■ For the full Laguna Lodge story, log on to [nypost.com/travel](http://nypost.com/travel)