

## E-recyclers seek certification to appease market

BY MATT JOYCE / STAFF WRITER

The safe and accountable recycling of old electronics will be front and center as the electronics-recycling industry converges on Dallas for one of the industry's premier trade shows.

More than 1,500 attendees are expected at the E-Scrap Conference & Tradeshow this Wednesday and Thursday at the Hyatt Regency Dallas.

Portland, Ore.-based Resource Recycling Inc. puts on the convention, now in its 10th year.

As electronics-recycling businesses proliferate in North Texas and across the nation, the industry has sought to address customer concerns about salvaging components as much as possible without damaging the environment or jeopardizing confidential data.

"Folks see value in these systems, and they want to pull out that value by reuse or repair, or by recycling the material into commodities such as precious metals, plastics and glass," said Eric Harris, associate counsel and director of government and international affairs for the Washington, D.C.-based Institute for Scrap Recycling Industries Inc.

"There's also an awareness that we don't want to put this material in landfills, because from a conservation standpoint, if we can recycle it, it's a win-win for the econo-

my and for the environment," he said.

The \$5 billion American e-recycling industry has grown more than 20 percent per year for the past 10 years, according to ISRI.

It employs more than 45,000 full-time employees.

In 2012, the industry processed about 3.5 million tons of electronics out of about 6 million to 7 million tons generated by commercial and residential sources.

North Texas has seen a handful of e-recycling companies open up in the past year.

The region's central location, logistics infrastructure, workforce, dense population and abundance of major electronics-consuming businesses make it attractive to the industry.

### Increased accountability

There are a few different e-recycling certification programs in the industry.

ISRI developed a standard called the Recycling Industry Operating Standard (RIOS), Harris said. ISRI also helped develop the Responsible Recycling (R2) standard, along with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other stakeholders.

More than 350 electronics recycling facilities have achieved certification in the past few years, Harris said.

"We have reached a point in the U.S. marketplace that if you really are serious about recycling electronics, you need to

have a certification," he said.

Wistron Corp., a Taiwanese electronics designer, achieved R2 and RIOS certification this March for its 40,000-square-foot recycling facility in Grapevine.

Bill Long, general manager of Wistron GreenTech, said the company pursued certification because customers asked for it. The company eliminated the use of flammable materials in its recycling processes and addressed state storm-water requirements for its property.

"The volume of business since we became certified has increased by more than 30 percent,"

Long said. "Some of that we believe is related to being certified, although it's difficult to track the specific cause in each case."

Henry Leineweber, managing editor of E-Scrap News, which is part of Resource Recycling, said the company chose Dallas to host this year's E-Scrap Conference because of the city's central location, status as a business hub and proximity to the high-tech industry in Austin.

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**Eric Harris**  
Institute for Scrap  
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