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## Don't Throw Out That Old Cell Phone

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You've saved up the money. You've figured out a way to get out of your old cell phone contract (or you're already an AT&T customer). You've cleared your calendar so you've got time to wait in line for the release. You're definitely ready for your new Apple iPhone.

One question remains: What are you going to do with your old phone?

First off, don't chuck it into the trash. Because cell phones are so small, many people think nothing of throwing the phones into the Dumpster; however, like computers, cell phones are full of complex circuits that can release poisonous lead, cadmium, arsenic and mercury into the environment.

The easiest way to dispose of your phone is to donate it to an organization that specializes in cell phone collection. Some cell phone companies and carriers -- such as AT&T, Sprint and Motorola -- have their own collection programs.

Depending on the condition of the phone, these organizations will either send the phone to a recycler or refurbish the phone.

If the phone is refurbished, it will either be donated to charity or sold overseas, usually in a developing country that doesn't have access to the latest and greatest communication devices.

Many of these organizations donate the majority of the proceeds to charity. Some do not, so if you want the money to go to charitable causes, first check the company out.

To find a cell phone collection center in your area, check out the EPA's page on electronics donations.

For more information:

- [Calling All Cell Phones: Collection, Reuse, And Recycling Programs In The U.S.](#)
- [From the EPA: How To Reduce Electronics Waste](#)
- [From the EPA: The Life Cycle Of A Cell Phone \[PDF file\]](#)
- [From the EPA: Where Can I Donate Or Recycle My Old Computer And Other Electronic Products?](#)

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