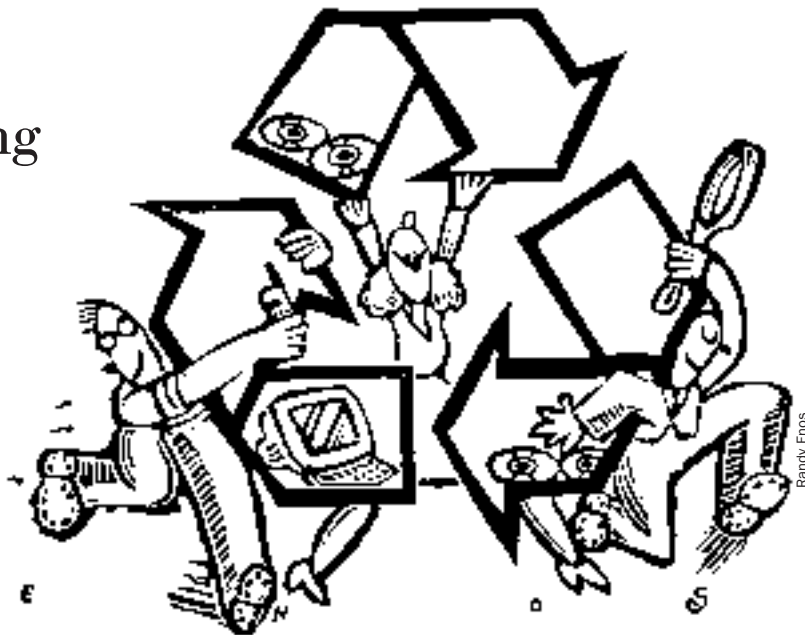


## The Color of Recycling

**E**D AND SUE SIEBEL are especially attached to their frying pan, a kitchen staple that's scrambled eggs for all five of their kids and endured for 35 years. So when the pan's Teflon bubbled, peeled and left black pieces in the eggs, tossing it wasn't an option.

"Throw it away? Heck no!" says Mr. Siebel, a lawyer in Balboa Island, Calif. Instead, they sent it to the FryPan Man in Oregon, a company that stripped it, recoated it and returned it to them. The charge: \$29.

The declutter and "green" movements are finding common ground in an unlikely place—at the cash register. From firms that charge to collect old CDs to manufacturers selling gadgets to reduce paper waste, there are an increasing number of businesses selling recycling chic. Philadelphia-based NeatReceipts recently introduced a \$230 "Scanalyzer" that transfers data from business cards, receipts and invoices into a computer (to curb household paper accumulation). GreenDisk, a Seattle-based company, charges consumers \$29.95 to pick up and recycle discarded electronics devices into office supplies. FryPan Man charges consumers \$17 to \$36 per re-coat job, from waffle irons to family heirloom pots—a busi-



ness that's doubled annually since it launched in 2002, according to the owner.

### e-waste

Many of these services have been inspired by the increase in what the industry has dubbed "e-waste," or electronic waste, which increased by almost seven

million tons between 2001 and 2003, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Between 1999 and the end of 2005, more than 250 million personal computers will have become obsolete; this year alone, 130 million cellphones will be discarded, says the National Safety Council, a public service group based in Illinois. That development worries consumers concerned about toxins such as mercury and lead that are found in computer components.

June Muller, a computer project manager who sits on the board of her Manhattan co-op, recently ordered three Technotrash Cans from GreenDisk to help make her building "green." Her neighbors recycled so many CDs and computer accessories she had to order more cans. "Everyone was glad to find a way to act responsibly without having to go find a tree to hug," she says.

Some organizations aren't doing this for profit. Subscribers to Freecycle.org, donate, request or exchange items—from "The Cat in the Hat" in Latin to Ouija boards—by posting on a local online message board and then arranging a pick-up. No money or shipping is involved; instead, the service relies on corporate sponsors.

Still, sometimes it seems the scale-down movement just creates more clutter. Andrew MacLean, a recruiter in Chapel Hill, N.C., joined Freecycle a month ago, but stopped using it when too many people wanted to get rid of old shoes and plastic bottles. "I have to sort out enough spam as it is," he says.

—Ashley Chapman