



## **A.9049 (SWEENEY, ET AL.)** **S.6047 (THOMPSON, ET AL.)**

### **Summary**

This bill would require electronics manufacturers to collect and recycle or reuse their products at the end of the useful lives of same. The bill defines “manufacturers” of electronic equipment to include entities that assemble, sell, import or own a brand name that is sold in New York State. This measure would require manufacturers to collect a minimum of three pounds per capita in the year 2010, four pounds in the year 2011, and five pounds in the year 2012. The collection rates from 2011 and 2012 would be averaged for a collection rate for 2013 and thereafter (at the discretion of the Department of Environmental Conservation). In addition, manufacturers would be prohibited from imposing collection fees on consumers. The bill would also prohibit the disposal of electronic equipment in traditional solid waste disposal systems, unless the facility is permitted to accept such waste. This bill sets penalties for manufacturers who fail to meet collection requirements and for all those who violate the disposal ban.

### **Explanation**

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, more than two million tons of used electronics were discarded nationwide in 2005, with less than 15 percent recycled, and the balance ending up in landfills or incinerators. That same year, an estimated 130,000 computers were discarded daily. The switch from analog to digital TV broadcasts this year could potentially encourage millions of consumers to discard old television sets. Add to that an estimated hundreds of millions of pieces of electronics stockpiled by consumers and businesses, waiting to enter the waste stream. Rapid changes in computers and other technologies add to the volume of e-waste every day.

E-waste is an environmental hazard. Computer monitors and older TV picture tubes contain on average five pounds of lead and require special handling upon disposal. In addition, these items are often riddled with toxics and known carcinogens, such as chromium, cadmium, mercury, beryllium, nickel, zinc and brominated flame retardants. When electronics are not disposed or recycled properly they pose a major threat to public health and the environment. In addition, a growing portion of the state’s e-waste is exported to developing countries where irresponsible disposal and scavenging result in negative impacts on human and environmental health. Furthermore, reducing and recycling the raw materials in many electronics conserves natural resources and reduces air and water pollution. This bill would do much to address the state’s growing e-waste challenge while protecting New Yorkers and the health of our natural resources by updating the state’s solid waste management policies.

**Environmental Advocates of New York strongly supports this bill.**

**Memo 67**