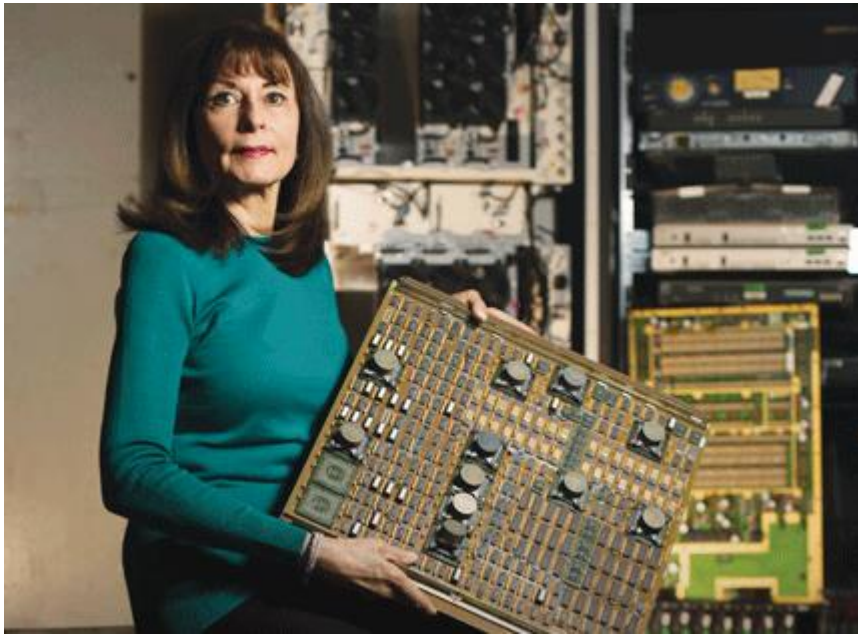


Electronic opportunity: All Green Recycling quickly has become a leader in disposing and recycling unwanted electronic equipment

By **Daria Meoli**, April 18, 2016 at 3:00 AM



Carol Jegou, chairman and CEO, All Green Recycling Inc. - (AARON HOUSTON)

As electronic devices permeate all corners of our daily lives, the lifespan of these devices is shrinking. With newer, faster and higher-def smartphones, tablets and televisions being released to much fanfare each year, the volume of electronic waste is skyrocketing.

One New Jersey couple saw this trend and smelled green.

Three years ago, Carol Jegou and her husband, Peter, co-founded All Green Recycling Inc. in New Brunswick after her 20-year career as a business consultant.

Carol Jegou did not have experience in the recycling industry, but Peter was a retired CEO of an environmental services company. What she lacked in direct experience, she made up for with a robust list of contacts that included women executives she consulted for over the years, giving her a startup with a client list that included Fortune 500 companies.

“Individuals and companies are buying more and more electronic devices, and the lifespan of these devices is between 18 months to two years,” said Carol Jegou, a lifelong New Jersey resident. “There is an ever-present need to recycle devices.”



EPA reports show that electronic waste is the fastest-growing municipal waste stream in America. Most electronic devices, from e-readers to widescreen televisions, are made from parts containing mercury, lead, cadmium, brominated flame retardants, barium and lithium. All of these substances are known to damage the environment and human health.

The regulations and requirements for disposal of e-waste vary from state to state. In 2011, New Jersey passed the Electronics Waste Management Act, which makes it illegal for residents and businesses to throw out electronic devices with other garbage for curbside pickup. The law covers televisions and all personal or portable computers.

“It’s basically become illegal to throw your electronics into a dumpster or into a landfill,” said Ian Dane F. Witt, senior account director at All Green Recycling. “We help them satisfy and fulfill their responsibility to recycle all of their electronics.”

In recent history, companies in the e-waste recycling industry contended with a notorious reputation. Companies claiming to recycle electronics were either just refurbishing and reselling the devices or shipping them overseas.

“I couldn’t be more committed to keeping the environment safe and clean,” Carol Jegou said. “The burning of computers is truly horrific. Nothing we recycle goes into the ground or goes overseas. Everything we do is done right here in the U.S.”

Training the people who help the planet

For All Green Recycling, having processes that benefit the planet was not enough. All Green Recycling founders Carol Jegou and Peter Jegou wanted to help people, as well.

“Because this industry is growing so rapidly and because we’ll have so many devices that will need to be recycled, we thought the best avenue for philanthropy was to train people with barriers to employment to recycle electronics,” Carol Jegou said.

The Jegous recently started a foundation to train disabled veterans as well as people with autism, multiple sclerosis and other barriers to employment to work in the electronic recycling industry.

Some of All Green Recycling’s clients specifically donate their electronics to the foundation for the purpose of training these employees.

To date, about 10 people have completed the program.

More than 50 percent of the world’s e-waste is shipped to informal recycling markets in China, India, Pakistan, Vietnam and the Philippines, where workers pick off the valuable gold, iron and copper from the devices for resale while being exposed to mercury, lead and cadmium. The remaining materials are shredded and burned, creating toxic emissions.

All Green Recycling represents a new generation of electronic waste recycling that adheres to EPA standards. All Green Recycling is R2 Certified, which means its recycling processes are evaluated by a stringent third party.

“There are still a number of states in North America that are not regulated,” she said. “So, (the industry) is still a bit of the Wild West. People and businesses need to understand that they can’t just throw their electronics in the dumpster. R2 certification standards were developed 10 years ago and we’ve understood the importance of the R2 certifications from Day One.”

While abiding by state regulations and making the world a little greener is important to All Green Recycling’s client base, which includes Cogent and Konica Minolta, data security is of paramount importance to the business.

“We believe data is only secure once the hard drive is shredded,” Jegou said. “And we have a very specific process for making sure all the data on the devices we acquire is secure.”



When All Green Recycling picks up devices from a client, anything with a hard drive is placed in a locked container and kept locked until the hard drives are shredded.

“That’s the first step in our process after we acquire any electronic that houses data, Witt said. “We remove that data hard drive or RAM from its parent electronic. From there, each one of those hard drives has been collected and kept in a locked container until shredding. Some clients even ask for the shredding to be videotaped.”

Depending on the customer profile and how they would like documentation for recycling and data destruction, All Green Recycling provides serialized inventories of the hard drives. And once destroyed, the client receives a certificate of destruction.

Because of the environmental rigors and data security processes the company has in place while providing what amounts to a vital service for businesses in some states, business is booming for All Green Recycling. The company’s footprint stretches from Massachusetts to Georgia.

Eighteen months ago, the business opened a second facility in Charlotte, North Carolina, where it developed propriety technology to extract the commodities from the circuit boards.

“We’ve seen the industry transformed by the increased awareness of responsible recycling over the last couple of years,” Witt said. “We are grateful that companies and states are pushing this effort forward, because not only does it give us the opportunity to serve more clients due to stricter laws on the local state and federal level, but it allows us to fulfill our mission of responsible recycling with a no landfill policy.”