

# Worcester Telegram & Gazette

## Business Focus

Wednesday, August 29, 2001

By Andi Esposito  
*BUSINESS EDITOR*



**GARDNER**-- Richard A. Peloquin discovered a quirky synergy after his television and computer recycling and repair company, ElectroniCycle Inc., moved to an old Gardner factory.

At the other end of the building is a small foundry that produces belt buckles and decorative car and motorcycle plates and could be the closest-ever market for some of the aluminum Mr. Peloquin's employees remove from thousands of discarded computer monitors sent to his company.

"Our biggest challenge right now is constantly seeking a true recycling destination for all the bits and pieces we have," Mr. Peloquin said yesterday. "It is rewarding when you find one like the aluminum guy."

ElectroniCycle, with 28 employees and more to be hired, expects to be fully operational in its new 50,000-square-foot location at 461-471 West Broadway by next week. In a former plastics factory the company is consolidating headquarters, processing, repair and retail operations that had been in Spencer, Auburn, Springfield and Middlebury, Vt.

ElectroniCycle hopes this year to process 10 million pounds of old televisions, computers and computer-related products and other electronic office equipment that comes from municipalities, private industry and individuals, said Mr. Peloquin.

About 70 percent of the volume is manually disassembled and sold as scrap to businesses that process or use the metal, glass, wire, wood and plastic. One of the company's goals is to sell as much of the scrap as it can to nearby companies, said Mr. Peloquin.

Some of the TV plastic goes to a Framingham company that uses it in roadway products, for example. Wood from old consoles is sold to a company in Southbridge, and wire to a Providence business that reclaims copper.

About 25 percent of the volume, mostly TV parts, is sold to other users, and as much as 5 percent will be repaired at the Gardner plant. So far this year, the company has shipped more than 500 repaired TVs and computers back for resale with Goodwill Industries and the Salvation Army, among others.

"Our goal is to make the recovery rate 100 percent, and we are darn close," said Mr. Peloquin, who incorporated the company in 1999 but has been involved in the TV repair industry since the late 1970s.

He said the move into recycling was a natural evolution. "I always saved and cataloged repairable TV parts because they had value."

ElectroniCycle's revenues this year, derived from fees and sales of scrap, usable parts and

repaired goods, are expected to reach \$2 million, up from \$1.2 million last year and \$400,000 in 1999.

In May, the company merged with American Retroworks Inc. of Middlebury, Vt. Under the arrangement, ElectroniCycle processes materials collected by American Retroworks and hired its principal, Robin Ingenthron.

Also helping ElectroniCycle to grow is a contract with the [Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection](#). ElectroniCycle is one of two companies DEP contracts to dispose of cathode ray tubes, said DEP spokesman Peter B. Nugent. The other is Superior Special Services Inc. of Stoughton.

Last year, Massachusetts became the first state to ban TVs and computer monitors from landfills. Other states, including California, categorize CRTs as hazardous waste, effectively banning them from landfills, said Mr. Nugent.

When the law went into effect, DEP also created a program to help pay for recycling services, said Mr. Ingenthron, vice president of ElectroniCycle. Under that program, ElectroniCycle recently received a \$50,000 DEP grant, one of 16 approved this year, to help with its relocation and expansion.

Right now, about half the volume of electronics products handled by the company comes from towns and cities through its DEP contract, and half from businesses. Any Massachusetts town or city or state agency can send CRTs to ElectroniCycle, paying 15 cents a pound for the material to be recycled.

Computers and related equipment make up half the volume and TVs the rest.

“We are seeing a gradual and always increasing curve in computer and computer-related equipment because of its shorter life cycle,” said Mr. Peloquin.

Used electronic equipment represents about 1 percent of the annual 209 million tons of solid waste generated each year in the United States, according to the U.S. [Environmental Protection Agency](#), and the category is growing fast. About 134,000 tons of electronic equipment was recycled in the United States in 1998, according to the most recent EPA figures, and another 1.3 million units were reused by third parties.

The volume of TVs destined for the junk heap remains stable each year, said Mr. Peloquin. But that is expected to change as broadcast protocol shifts to high-definition television in 2006, he said.

The shift is expected to produce a big spike in discarded sets. “And we are gearing up to accommodate that flow,” said Mr. Peloquin.

[Send this page to a friend](#)

[Get a printer-friendly version of this page](#)

[eWorcester](#) | [telegram](#) | [OnTheCommon](#) | [Family Sites](#)  
[Yellow Pages](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [The Diner](#) | [Personals](#)  
[Weather](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Contact us](#)

©2001 Worcester Telegram & Gazette Corp.

[Order the Telegram & Gazette.](#)  
[delivered daily to your home or office!](#)