

No need to export e-waste with Hong Kong recycling plant at full capacity, officials say

[scmp.com/print/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/2137585/no-need-export-e-waste-hong-kong-recycling-plant](https://www.scmp.com/print/news/hong-kong/health-environment/article/2137585/no-need-export-e-waste-hong-kong-recycling-plant)

Hong Kong would no longer need to dump its electronic waste in Southeast Asia and Africa when the city's new recycling facility runs at full capacity, local environmental authorities said on Friday.

The three-hectare recycling facility in Eco Park, Tuen Mun, measures six football pitches in area and is set to begin all lines of operation on Monday. At full capacity, it could recycle 57,000 tonnes of electronic waste per year, according to Dr Alain Lam Kwok-lun of the Environmental Protection Department.

About 70,000 tonnes of electrical and electronic equipment waste are disposed annually in Hong Kong, of which 85 per cent is regulated e-waste, such as air conditioners, refrigerators, washing machines, televisions, monitors and computers.



Lam said the recycling facility could process 57,000 tonnes by extending its operating hours. But he did not say when that could happen.

“Hong Kong has one of the best recycling facilities in the region,” Lam said on Friday.

We can recycle 30,000 tonnes of electronic waste a year

Nigel Mattavers, Alba

About 80 per cent of the city's e-waste is shipped abroad, such as to Africa and Southeast Asia, while the rest is handled locally and dumped in landfills.

The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment plant is operated by government contractor Alba Integrated Waste Solutions (Hong Kong), the local arm of German company Alba Group, which won the international tender to recycle the city's e-waste.

Alba director and general manager Nigel Mattravers noted the firm began with two lines of operation last October. "With four lines, we can recycle 30,000 tonnes of electronic waste a year," he said.

Mattravers echoed Lam's claim that longer operating hours would help the plant recycle "57,000 tonnes a year". The firm has 150 employees.

In January, it processed 357,849 kilograms of e-waste, of which 46 per cent was washing machines and 32 per cent televisions. From this amount, it recycled around 214,000 kilograms of rescuable materials including iron, aluminium, copper and plastics.



Mattravers said the firm refurbished home appliances if they were in good condition and donated them to families in need, collaborating with charities such as Crossroads Foundation and Christian Action.

From August 1 onwards, those in Hong Kong who supply air conditioners, refrigerators, washing machines, televisions, computers, printers, scanners and monitors must have in place a free removal service for customers. Their service must be approved by the Environmental Protection Department.

City residents can call the Alba hotline on +852 2676 8888, for free pickup of their electronic appliances. The company vows to pick up within three days, Mattravers said.