San Francisco sours on Apple computers

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A pedestrian in San Francisco, California, walks by an Apple Store in April 2012. San Francisco city officials on Thursday said that they have soured on Apple computers due to the Macintosh maker's decision to bail out of a program to promote making electronics earth friendly.

San Francisco city officials on Thursday said that they have soured on Apple computers due to the Macintosh maker's decision to bail out of a program to promote making electronics earth friendly.

The California company behind coveted iPads, iPhones, iPods and Macbook computers in June abandoned the Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool global registry for "greener electronics" and did not respond to requests for comment about the move.

The city of San Francisco for several years has had a rule in place that requires laptops, computers or monitors bought by departments to meet

top EPEAT standards.

Apple's name was off the EPEAT member list this week and it has removed the registry's symbol from packaging.

"Apple's decision to have its products removed from the EPEAT registry will make it difficult for city employees to procure Apple laptops, monitors and (desktop computers) in the future," said city chief information officer Jon Walton.

"San Francisco has reached out to Apple and is hopeful that a solution to this challenge can be found in the future."

The procurement rule is similar to a standard used by other US cities and states as well as by the federal government, according to Walton.

"There is no ban or boycott in place in San Francisco on Apple products and none is being considered," city Environment Department director Melanie Nutter said.

However, she added, the city purchaser "will be issuing a letter to remind city agencies about the city's technology purchasing policies."

Nutter's department assists in implementing the city's green purchasing ordinance.

"We are reaching out to understand why Apple decided to withdraw its participation from the EPEAT eco-label program for computers and hope to learn about how their products meet green standards in San Francisco," Nutter said.

The Green Electronics Council in 2009 went international with a registry that shows how computers and monitors measure up when it comes to

being Earth-friendly.

EPEAT gives green ratings to computer desktops, laptops and monitors.

It was launched in the United States in 2006 with corporations and other large IT purchasers in mind but the registry is available for anyone to consult online for free at epeat.net.

Electronics makers and other interested parties establish EPEAT criteria used to rate computers, with bronze, silver and gold being the top rankings.

The standards factor in energy savings, production methods, toxic components, packaging, life spans and the ease with which electronics can be recycled.

EPEAT, which is overseen by the nonprofit Green council, was started with a grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency but is supported by fees manufacturers pay to register products.

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