

Chinese develop e-waste technology

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Chinese scientists say they have developed a recycling and recovery technology designed especially for disposal of printed circuit boards.

Zhenming Xu and colleagues at Shanghai Jiao Tong University said printed circuit boards are an ideal target for recycling and reuse since they are self-contained modules of interconnected electronic components formed by a thin layer of conducting material deposited, or "printed," on the surface of an insulating board.

Such boards contain materials potentially toxic if released to the environment, but they are also a rich potential source of valuable metals and other materials that could be recovered and reused.

The researchers say the technology they developed involves special crushing of scrap boards, followed by separation of the metallic and non-metallic materials with an electric field. The scientists say the technique has advantages over other methods proposed for recycling printed circuit boards.

The process is described in the current issue of the journal *Environmental Science & Technology*.

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