Recycling event collects 37K pounds of e-waste

- by Lijah Sampson Mail Staff Writer
- May 7, 2024

Anthony Alarcon from ITAD Electronics Recycling moves a microwave to the appropriate box at the electronics recycling event May 4 at Chaffee County Fairgrounds. A total of 37,000 pounds of waste was collected. (Photo by Lijah Sampson)

Photo by Lijah Sampson

ITAD Electronics Recycling collected about 37,000 pounds of e-waste at the annual electronics waste drop-off event May 4 at Chaffee County Fairgrounds in Poncha Springs.

The amount was more than a 20 percent increase over what was collected in 2023, according to Michael Kunkel, a longtime volunteer for recycling initiatives in Salida and Poncha Springs.

More than 450 participants/vehicles brought items to the e-recycling event. Last year 300 vehicles were counted.

 Kunkel said the event has been happening in Salida/Poncha Springs for more than 20 years now. Since 2020, 150,000 pounds has been diverted from landfills.

"People love that the event's essentially free, but they want to know when the next hazardous waste drop-off is going to be," Kunkel said.

Colin Hughes, owner of ITAD Electronics Recycling, said, "Nowadays having a sustainable solution for all this waste is important. … In big cities there's all the companies that can take them.".

He said this event is important because "you have all kinds of toxins and rare earth metals (e.g., lead, mercury) ... that can be very harmful if it gets into the water supply." It was the company's first year operating the event.