
Contribution to Society Based On Recycling

– Our Responsibilities and Challenges –



Kaoru Tamura

Operating Officer

With the 21st century already here, our lives are becoming richer and more comfortable than ever before. However, this progress has brought with it not only "material abundance" but the inevitable waste with which we pay for the progress. The social system characterized by mass production, mass consumption, and mass disposal that led the economic growth of the 20th century has resulted in serious issues that currently confront us, such as global warming and industrial waste.

Many wastes can be converted to reusable resources. There is a need for a building a " recycling-based society" that reduces the exploitation of natural resources and puts to wise use the same materials over and over again, while disposing of those that cannot be recycled to minimize the burden on the environment. What we need to build is a "triangular" recycling society, which allows production, consumption, and reproduction as opposed to the traditional one-way system, which flows only from production to consumption. It is imperative for business enterprises to take into consideration product recycling in whatever they do; they need to develop recyclable products and find ways to re-use products.

To build a recycling-based society, the "Recycling-Based Society Building Promotion Package" was signed into law in May, 2000 and put in place June 2, 2000. The law is intended to provide a basic framework for building a recycling-based society, facilitating a comprehensive and systematic approach to the issues of industrial waste and recycling of products. The package includes the Consumer Electronics Recycling Act that makes it compulsory for consumer electronics manufacturers and suppliers to collect and recycle their waste products. The society we set out to build is not only where relevant laws are put in place but also where the business enterprises can get what they deserve according to the contribution they make to improving the environment.

We at Sanyo Denki are guided by one of our corporate philosophies: "Help preserve the global environment and develop humanity through business activities." We are committed at all levels in our operation to the Environment Management System (ISO 14001).

It should also be remembered that the effort to build a genuine recycling-based society should begin with the individuals that comprise a business enterprise.

We should realize the importance of "reduce", "re-use" and "recycle" in the throw-away society to ensure waste is reduced to a minimum and duly disposed. This is the responsibility that we have for our contemporaries as well as for the next generation. What is expected of us to make is a paradigm shift from "materialistic abundance" to "wealth of the spirit" as something we seek in our lives. For this to happen, prompt action should be taken to re-examine our own lifestyles and economic activities and take on the challenge of building a society where the consumption of limited resources can be placed under control to relieve the environment of the burdens it would otherwise bear.