



A Program with the  
Colorado Attorney General  
and the AARP Foundation



Colorado Attorney General  
John W. Suthers



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# Protect your identity while donating your used electronics

Spring is just around the corner and as we prepare to clean out our unused and unwanted items around our home it is important to protect our personal information while doing so. Many households have computers and electronics that hold personal information that is very valuable to scam artists.

## Here are some tips to use when donating your personal computer:

**Before donating or recycling your computer, you can avoid identity theft by erasing personal data and removing your files.** Windows and Mac OS don't completely remove files you delete, but third-party software can.

## **Here are some other things to keep in mind:**

- Recycle old and broken hardware.
- Contact the recycler or refurbisher before recycling as some offer free system erasing. If they do not offer this service a good, free program is Eraser. Just download the program from <http://eraser.heidi.ie/> and follow the instructions on the Web site.
- Alternatively, you can take many PC's back to their factory-fresh condition by using the Restore CD that may have come with the machine.
- Remember to include the accessories.
- To ensure that the software transfer is legal, pass along the original disks, media, Certificate of Authenticity Sticker (usually on the computer), user manual, and other documentation that came with the equipment.

**If you find this process too cumbersome, contact a professional in your area to erase your computer or electronics. You may also find door-to-door pick up and recycling in your area by visiting [earth911.com](http://earth911.com).**

**Protect your identity!**

*Prevent Financial Elder Abuse!*

**1-800-222-4444**

Denver Metro Area  
303-222-4444

[www.aarpelderwatch.org](http://www.aarpelderwatch.org)

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