

## Tone-up on Recycled Cartridges

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Advertisements for companies going “green” are abundant lately. How green are they really? They mention environmentally friendly cleaning products, recycled paper, paperless work environments and recycling materials used in the office. Are they buying recycled ink and toner cartridges? According to Recharger Magazine, the plastic in each toner cartridge takes 3.5 quarts of oil to produce and each new inkjet cartridge requires 2.5 ounces of oil. Given the prices of gasoline the last few years makes me wonder, why aren't more companies and people buying recycled cartridges? Research indicates many feel recycled cartridges are not as reliable or as high quality as original equipment manufacturer (OEM) cartridges. That may be true of many thousands of recycled ink and toner suppliers found on the internet, but it is not true of the products coming from the top ink and toner remanufacturers in the world. Furthermore, many individuals have had successful experiences refilling cartridges at cartridge refill stations.

Cartridge refill stations and stores are convenient for the individual consumer. To have a cartridge refilled at a refill station, give your empty ink cartridge to the clerk. They will test your cartridge electronically to ensure all circuits on your cartridge are functioning properly. If your cartridge passes the electronic test, they refill your cartridge using a machine. They are able to fill black ink cartridges as well as color cartridges. This process takes approximately a half hour. Refilled cartridges may be ideal for the individual consumer with a home office. However, the refilled cartridges from these stations are not sold with a clear guarantee and may not be the best choice for a busy office environment.

If you've tried an uncertified ink or toner cartridge with disappointing results, perhaps a certified cartridge is a cost-saving solution for you or your office. The top cartridge remanufacturers developed quality control standards to ensure they produce a certified, high quality, reliable product. The lengths these ink and toner suppliers go thru to produce a quality cartridge astound. Special production facilities certified by the ISO (International Standards Organization) are used to produce a certified remanufactured cartridge.

To produce a certified inkjet cartridge, the cartridges are electronically tested to ensure all circuits are functioning. The chips are replaced or reset on certified cartridges as needed. An automated vacuum filling technique is used to clean and fill ink cartridges to maximum capacity. Over 200 different black, cyan, magenta and yellow inks are used to be sure the best and most correct ink is used for each particular cartridge. This process gives the best possible print quality. Skilled technicians perform physical inspection and testing on the cartridges to ensure a high quality product.

For certified laser cartridges, each cartridge is inspected and parts are replaced or refurbished as necessary. Using over 50 types of the highest grade toner specifically matched to each laser printer, copier or fax machine, the cartridges are refilled, reassembled and tested by hand.

Certified ink and toner cartridges must pass a weight test to ensure they are filled to maximum capacity. In many cases more ink and toner is used to fill cartridges than the originals, making them last longer than the original cartridges. Certified cartridges are tested in printers and batches of cartridges are selected for additional quality control testing including page yield output testing and highlighter performance testing. Finally, certified cartridges are backed by a clear 100% money-back guarantee.

Becoming an environmentally-friendly office takes time, research and commitment. Recycling empty ink and toner cartridges helps reduce landfill waste. According to Recharger Magazine, each year more than 300 million plastic printer cartridges are dumped in landfills in the United States and around the world which is the mass equivalent of 57,612 Ford Explorers or 112,463 Volkswagon Beetles. The U.S. Department of Energy Office of Industrial Technologies says although recycling of toner cartridges does have a number of benefits, remanufacturing is a superior choice, both environmentally and economically. Choosing remanufactured cartridges instead of new original cartridges is significantly more beneficial to our environment than recycling cartridges alone. Whether originals, refilled, certified remanufactured, or a combination of all three is the solution to your ink and toner needs, remember refilled and certified remanufactured cartridges offer cost-savings as well as environmental benefits.

Caboodle Cartridge, 2008 Entrepreneur of the Year for the Queen Anne's County Chamber of Commerce, is a reliable resource for certified remanufactured and compatible toner and ink cartridges. Contact Courtney Estelow, owner at 410-758-0300 or by email at [Courtney@doyoucaboodle.com](mailto:Courtney@doyoucaboodle.com).