

*Eco-Tip for 2/18/18*

## **Microwave: Options Prevent Disposal**

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Because microwave ovens have circuit boards, including solder potentially containing mercury and lead, they cannot be disposed in your curbside recycling or garbage. Discarding one is also difficult because some electronic recycling facilities accepting computers do not accept microwaves. A funded system for electronics such as computers and devices with screens does not provide similar coverage for companies or non-profits to accept microwaves.

Instead, the most convenient option may be to use an electronic waste drop-off site. The largest local facilities are the Pollution Prevention Center near Ojai, Del Norte Regional Recycling and Transfer Station in Oxnard, Gold Coast Transfer and Recycling in Ventura, Clean Harbors in Camarillo, and the Thousand Oaks Service Center. You can find more about these and other options at the County Public Works web site, [www.vcpublicworks.org](http://www.vcpublicworks.org), click on "recycling programs" then "household hazardous waste."

Another option is repair. On-line shops selling replacement parts have great web sites explaining simple repairs for household items like microwaves. Following their directions, you can determine the problem, order the right part, and make the repair.

In some cases, you can solve microwave problems yourself without any interaction with electronic parts. For example, the most frightening of all microwave problems is when your oven arcs and sparks, but this may simply be caused by pieces of metal sponge left behind during cleaning. It could also be caused by a corroded, cracked, or chipped microwave guide cover. The guide cover is a clear plastic square fitted into a holder on the inside wall of the oven. Replacing it requires no more contact with electronics than you might have if you were just placing food inside your oven.

Of course, the first step before examining a broken microwave would be to unplug it, but you would do that anyway if you were planning to dispose it.

*More information:*

<https://www.repairclinic.com/RepairHelp/Microwave-Repair-Help>

<https://www.doityourself.com/stry/repairmicrowave>

<https://www.partselect.com/Repair/Microwave/>