



# Pioneer recycler takes award

SILENT  
ACHIEVER

**NIGEL  
AUSTIN**



THE years of meticulous work and unbelievable efforts that many people put into running small businesses was highlighted when E-Cycle Recovery won the 2012 Telstra SA Small Business Award last week.

Since E-Cycle Recovery director Michelle Morton started the ethical and socially responsible company in 2005, it has grown to recycle 3000 tonnes of electronic products, including televisions and computers, a year.

Guarding the environment from pollution by heavy metals such as lead, phosphorus, mercury, selenium and cadmium – which are contained in obsolete electronic goods – is a key goal of the business.

While nearly all council hard rubbish collections deposit electronic goods and their pollutants directly to landfill, posing significant health and environmental problems, Ms Morton is fighting a rearguard action to improve Australia's recycling standards.

Armed with a degree in internation-

al business and marketing, she started the company after working as a business planner for a can and bottle recycling centre, where she was often asked by people what they could do with their old televisions and computers. "Landfill was their only option and so after a lot of research, I decided to start this company," Miss Morton said.

"The right way is to dismantle the products and reuse the parts in new items. When we started we decided to give people the option of having their equipment dismantled properly.

"A lot of the challenge has been to educate the public and governments on how to recycle in a safe and responsible manner."

Ms Morton said it had been fantastic to start the business with a blank canvas and build it into a larger company with an unlimited future.

But business success has only been achieved through her extreme diligence and optimism in the face of

scepticism, when many other people couldn't visualise its potential.

Ms Morton said public ignorance about the environmental and health dangers results in considerable hazardous material being exported and processed in a most abhorrent way.

E-Cycle Recovery recycles anything electronic, from televisions and computers to mobile phones and vacuum cleaners and charges its customers a small fee for doing so.

"We could recycle a lot more but the challenge is to get more material because most is still going to landfill," she said.

In its short life, E-Cycle Recovery has won a series of other awards, while Ms Morton was added to the SA Women's Honour Roll in 2009 for contribution to change. E-Cycle Recovery will compete in the national Telstra Awards for best small business at the end of the month.



**SAFE OPTION:** Michelle Morton, who started E-Cycle Recovery to stop electronic goods going to landfill.

**Picture:** TAIT SCHMAAL