

Apple Refuses to Step Up Sustainability Reporting

BY [Ariel Schwartz](#), Jan. 14, 2010



After a years of being the loser, Apple is now a leader when it comes to green manufacturing. Last year, the company became the first electronics maker to completely eliminate toxic PVC plastic and brominated flame retardants (BFRs) from its products. And just last week, [we praised Apple](#) for rising through the ranks of the Greenpeace Guide to Electronics. But perhaps our praise came too soon, as recent reports claim that Apple is opposing two shareholder petitions to increase sustainability reporting. We have to ask--what is Apple trying to hide?

[As You Sow](#), a foundation for corporate responsibility, is asking Apple to create a sustainability report much like those already issued by companies including IBM, HP, and Dell. A different shareholder group is requesting that the company set up a board committee on sustainability. Apple opposes both petitions on the grounds that it has already taken appropriate measures to protect the planet. Specifically, the company claims that its environmental [Web site](#) "represents the most comprehensive accounting of any electronics company's carbon footprint".

The Apple Environment Web site is comprehensive, to be sure, but it's hard to compare the company's efforts to those of other electronics manufacturers without an annual sustainability report. And we can't figure out what the reasoning is behind Apple's rejection of a board committee on sustainability, even if the company is already doing more than its peers. Since when is Apple satisfied with being marginally ahead of its competitors in any arena?