In developing countries, small companies recover precious metal from appliance waste manually, which is a health hazard for workers and contributes to environmental pollution. Home appliances contain both hazardous substances and useful resources, such as rare metals. Treatment through sophisticated resource recovery technology produces merit in terms of environmental preservation and the reuse of precious resources.

During the 1990s, the introduction of wide-ranging larger home appliances increased the burden of municipality-managed bulk waste treatment facilities in Japan. The compacting of these appliances became difficult, and the ability of such facilities to recover useful resources reached its limit, making it necessary to search for alternative methods of recycling, which led to the enactment of the Home Appliance Recycling Law in 2001. This law included the concept of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), in which the responsibility of the producers extended to disposal at the end of product life. Now, appliance producers, etc. are the ones recycling items specified in the law and recycling is made more efficient through a high recycling rate.

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