

The E-Waste Problem in America

With the exponential growth in technology, electronic waste (or e-waste), such as computers, monitors, cell phones and other products, is becoming an exceedingly dangerous problem for our environment. The increasing amount of e-waste being dumped into landfills all over the world releases hazardous chemicals and harmful toxins into soil and streams.

Compounding the problem is the fact that many e-waste recyclers do not track the sometime circuitous route their collections take. In fact, many times e-waste ultimately ends up in landfills.

E-waste has become such a global concern that many countries have banned it from landfills. For example, the European Union in 2002 implemented the *Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive*, which holds manufacturers responsible for e-waste disposal at end-of-life.

E-waste policies in Europe are beginning to catch on here in the United States. A number of states have passed e-waste laws and the trend continues to gather steam in other states.

E-waste Facts & Figures

- According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):
 - 80 to 85 percent of electronic products were thrown into landfills or incinerators, which can release certain toxics into the air.
 - Some of these toxics include lead, mercury, arsenic, beryllium cadmium, chromium and some types of flame-retardant chemicals, all of which are poisonous at varying exposure levels.
- E-waste represents 2 percent of America's trash in landfills.
- E-waste equals over 70 percent of the toxic waste in our landfills.
- Americans discard on average 130,000 personal computers every day.
- Americans own in excess of 2 billion electronic devices.
- Our government disposes of approximately 10,000 computers every week.
- Americans dispose of 130 million cell phones annually.
- The U.S. produces 2.3 billion pounds of e-waste each year.
- Only 12.5 percent of e-waste is currently recycled.
- Over 500 million personal computers will become obsolete in 2009.
- Massachusetts, New York and Washington state are among nine states and cities that have begun drafting take-back legislation, which require electronics producers to take back and responsibly manage their old and obsolete electronics.

Why should you recycle e-waste?

Protect public health and the environment:
Avoid throwing e-waste into landfills, which will contain the exposure of toxins in the atmosphere.

Conserve natural resources:
There are many products that can be made from e-waste, such as jewelry, automotive catalytic converters, garden furniture, license-plate frames and much more.

Create jobs:
As demand for electronics recycling increases, new businesses will form and existing companies will grow.

A No Cost Solution

With e-waste growing at an accelerated rate, recycling electronics can be very costly. Possitivity is one of the only places in the country that provides this service for free for businesses of any size, as well as for consumers.

*If you'd like to learn more or if you have e-waste concerns that need resolution, contact **PossitivityGreen**.*

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