

## E-Waste Recycling

The current technological boom era that has encompassed the 21st century has formed many well-being benefits as we strive to create an easier life style. As a result of this objective the sheer amount of electronic devices produced annually to succeed the latter generation of technology is almost exponential as every year there is a new Apple iPhone, Samsung galaxy, and gaming console to fuel consumerism. The culture of our consumerism creates a large influx of electronic waste (e-waste) which is more often than not disposed incorrectly through conventional landfills and illegal exports rather than electronic waste recycling centres. Incorrect disposal of electronic creates a very hazardous environment as e-waste can contain over 1000 toxic substances that produce severe pollution when disposed. Sustainable disposal of e-waste from household generation is currently a more reliable source than large corporations and government who seek cheaper management systems resulting in the illegal exportation of e-waste to developing countries which lowers their welfare and environmental integrity.

Since the 1992 Basel Convention which aimed to control transboundary movements of hazardous waste there is still documented unregulated recycling centres within developing countries. Countries that have ratified the Basel Convention remain the main culprits of illegal exports of e-waste to the developing countries which identifies a key flaw in government regulation of e-waste and the enforceability of the Basel Convention. The reason why exporting to undeveloped countries is such a common occurrence is because it is cheaper and undeveloped countries lack environmental standards which overall helps the exporting countries economy. Therefore, the corporations do not have to deal with the large amounts of e-waste and the expensive process that is done to remove the toxins without polluting the environment. Solutions to reducing corporate and industry incorrect e-waste disposal could be found through some sort of subsidy scheme or incentive package for recording e-waste disposal through a recognised e-waste disposal centre. Education and interpretation for companies and communities could also be effective in implementing best-practice for e-waste disposal as they can experience firsthand the impacts that improper e-waste disposal has on normal landfills and the countries that receive the exports.

### References

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2. The Basel Action Network; Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition, 2002. The High-Tech Trashing of Asia, Seattle: Basel Action Network.

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