

HOME (/)  
ABOUT  
JOURNAL (/ABOUT)  
MASTHEAD (/NEW-PAGE)  
PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS (/PROSPECTIVE-MEMBERS)  
SUBSCRIBE (/SUBSCRIBE)  
STAFF RESOURCES (/STAFF-RESOURCES)  
PUBLICATIONS  
PUBLICATION ARCHIVE (/PUBLICATION-ARCHIVE)  
VOLUME 1 (2009) (/VOLUME-1-2008-2009)  
VOLUME 2 (2010) (/VOLUME-2-2009-2010)  
VOLUME 3 (2011) (/VOLUME-3-2010-2011)  
VOLUME 4 (2012) (/VOLUME-4-2011-2012)  
VOLUME 5 (2013) (/VOLUME-5-2012-2013)  
VOLUME 6 (2014) (/VOLUME-6-2013-2014)  
VOLUME 7 (2015) (/VOLUME-7-2014-2015)  
VOLUME 8 (2016) (/VOLUME-8-2015-2016)  
VOLUME 9 (2017) (/VOLUME-9-2016-2017)  
VOLUME 10 (2018) (/VOLUME-10-2018)  
SYMPOSIUM  
INFORMATION (/SYMPOSIUM)  
BLOG  
FULL BLOG (/FULL-BLOG)  
BLOG ARCHIVE (/BLOG-ARCHIVE-1)  
  
SUBMISSIONS (/SUBMISSIONS)

May 23, 2012 (/full-blog/2012/05/e-waste-damaging-to-environment-and.html)

## E-Waste: Damaging to the Environment and Earth's Natural Resources - Advocating for E-Waste Producer Responsibility Legislation (/full-blog/2012/05/e-waste-damaging-to-environment-and.html)

"Electronics Recycling Act of 2011" (/full-blog?category=%22Electronics+Recycling+Act+of+2011%22), "e-waste" (/full-blog?category=%22e-waste%22), "electronic waste" (/full-blog?category=%22electronic+waste%22), "legislation" (/full-blog?category=%22legislation%22)



(<https://static.squarespace.com/static/53fe85a0e4b0516a0c4fed1a/54002444e4b0123f9872f024/54002458e4b0123f9872f227/1409295448437/1000w/>)

Electronics manufacturers continue to make impressive strides in the development of technology.[1] ([http://#\\_edn1](#)) Light-weight and thin flat screen television models have begun to completely replace the traditional and obsolete “tube-style” television. Cell phone companies indirectly encourage consumers to buy new cell phones through incentives such as upgrades in return for continued loyalty with a particular carrier.

Consumers focus their attention on acquiring these new electronics, but likely spend little time considering how to properly dispose of their old equipment. Thus, a new environmental and natural resource problem is spawned: Electronic waste, or E-Waste.[2] ([http://#\\_edn2](#)) Used consumer electronics are overcrowding landfills and “represent the fastest growing segment of local solid waste in our country.”[3] ([http://#\\_edn3](#)) Foreign countries without the capacity to safely handle the problem also bear the burden as they receive tons of used electronic waste from the United States.[4] ([http://#\\_edn4](#))

Electronic waste is not only harmful to the environment, but is also a waste of “valuable materials, such as precious metals and rare earth minerals, which can be recycled.”[5] ([http://#\\_edn5](#)) For example, “for every one million cell phones recycled, 75 pounds of gold, 772 pounds of silver, 33 pounds of palladium, and more than 35,000 pounds of copper can be recovered.”[6] ([http://#\\_edn6](#)) These statistics and the sheer amount of used electronic waste in landfills leads to the need to recycle the valuable natural resources found in these discarded products. “Recycling these components conserves materials, prevents air and water pollution, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions that occur during extraction, manufacturing and processing.”[7] ([http://#\\_edn7](#))

The federal government has not yet mandated that E-Waste be recycled, despite several attempts to pass a federal law.[8] ([http://#\\_edn8](#)) At least 65 percent of the states, however, have either already passed E-Waste legislation or have at least considered such legislation in 2011.[9] ([http://#\\_edn9](#)) Perhaps the most logical approach has been taken by almost all of the states: requiring manufacturers to foot the bill for recycling the electronics (the Producer Responsibility Approach).[10] ([http://#\\_edn10](#)) Although a federal law is not on the books yet, the Responsible Electronics Recycling Act of 2011 “has been introduced in both the House and Senate.”[11] ([http://#\\_edn11](#)) The states without current E-Waste laws should strive to pass such legislation, and the federal government should continue to work at establishing nationwide standards that will increase the recycling and conservation of these valuable materials found in used electronics while decreasing the harmful effects that used electronics have on the environment and our health.[12] ([http://#\\_edn12](#))

---

[1] ([http://#\\_ednref](#)) California Department of Toxic Substances Control, *Electronic Hazardous Waste (E-Waste)*, 2007, <http://www.dtsc.ca.gov/hazardouswaste/ewaste/>.

[2] ([http://#\\_ednref](#)) Environment News Service, *Obama’s New E-Waste Task Force Spurs Recovery of Metals, Minerals*, Nov. 16, 2010, <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/nov2010/2010-11-16-092.html>.

[3] ([http://#\\_ednref](#)) *Id.*

[4] ([http://#\\_ednref](#)) *Id.*

[5] ([http://#\\_ednref](#)) *Id.*

[6] ([http://#\\_ednref](#)) *Id.*

[7] ([http://#\\_ednref](#)) *Id.*

[8] ([http://#\\_ednref](#)) U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Waste – Resource Conservation – Common Wastes & Materials – eCycling*, Nov. 2, 2011, <http://www.epa.gov/osw/conservel/materials/ecycling/rules.htm> (<http://www.epa.gov/osw/conservel/materials/ecycling/rules.htm>).

[9] ([http://#\\_ednref](#)) Electronics Take Back Coalition, *States are Passing E-Waste Legislation*, <http://www.electronicstakeback.com/promote-good-laws/state-legislation/> (<http://www.electronicstakeback.com/promote-good-laws/state-legislation/>).

[10] ([http://#\\_ednref](#)) *Id.*

[11] ([http://#\\_ednref](#)) Olga Khazan, *Boosted by regulations, a small business opens its own lobby shop*, THE WASHINGTON POST, Feb. 13, 2012, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/on-small-business/boosted-by-regulations-a-small-business-opens-its-own-lobby-shop/2012/02/09/gIQAxoaR2Q\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/on-small-business/boosted-by-regulations-a-small-business-opens-its-own-lobby-shop/2012/02/09/gIQAxoaR2Q_story.html) ([http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/on-small-business/boosted-by-regulations-a-small-business-opens-its-own-lobby-shop/2012/02/09/gIQAxoaR2Q\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/on-small-business/boosted-by-regulations-a-small-business-opens-its-own-lobby-shop/2012/02/09/gIQAxoaR2Q_story.html)).

[12] ([http://#\\_ednref](#)) *See* fn. 2, *supra*.

♥ 0 Likes   ↩ Share

COMMENTS (0)

Newest First   Subscribe via e-mail

Preview   POST COMMENT...

Newer Post

[Contractual Relationships Between Agricultural Growers and Commodity Buyers \(/full-blog/2012/05/contractual-relationships-between.html\)](#)

Older Post

[High Gas Prices: Desperate Times, but No Call for Desperate Measures \(/full-blog/2012/05/high-gas-prices-desperate-times-but-no.html\)](#)

SEARCHABLE ARCHIVE (/PUBLICATION-ARCHIVE-1)

631 SOUTH LIMESTONE, LEXINGTON, KY

40508 (859) 257-4747 [BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM) ([MAILTO:BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM))