

Enviro FACTS

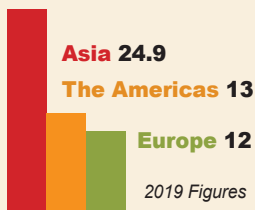
EWASTE *It's time to tune out Electronic Waste*

EWaste (electronic waste) is discarded electrical equipment that is obsolete or no longer wanted. Examples include office equipment, cell phones, microwaves, televisions, laptops, refrigerators, computer keyboards, video game components, stereo equipment, radios, etc.

How much do we produce?

It is estimated that close to 50 million tons of EWaste is produced annually worldwide. In the U.S., we generate nearly 7 million tons of EWaste per year (roughly 46 pounds per person). By 2030, the global total is likely to reach 75 million tons of EWaste yearly, making it the world's fastest growing solid waste stream.

Top EWaste Producers
in millions of tons



Impacts of EWaste on the environment

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that only 15 to 20 percent of EWaste is recycled, meaning most of it is landfilled or incinerated. Once in a landfill, EWaste has the potential to leach toxic chemicals into groundwater. In the U.S., 40-70 percent of heavy metals, like lead and mercury, found in landfills comes from discarded electronics.

Toxic dumping grounds

Developing countries such as China and India are becoming toxic dumping grounds for the world's EWaste. Millions of tons of EWaste are being shipped to developing countries every year.

The value of EWaste

While EWaste contains some hazardous components, it also consists of valuable materials that are scarce. Up to 80 percent of the materials used in cell phones can be reused or recycled. Billions of mobile phones are being discarded around the world every year.

From one million recycled cell phones, we can recover:



EWaste regulations

Fewer than half of the states in the U.S. have laws banning electronics from the regular trash. In West Virginia, legislation was passed in 2011 that prohibited the disposal of covered electronic devices (CEDs), such as TVs and computers, in state landfills. The law was reversed in 2016.

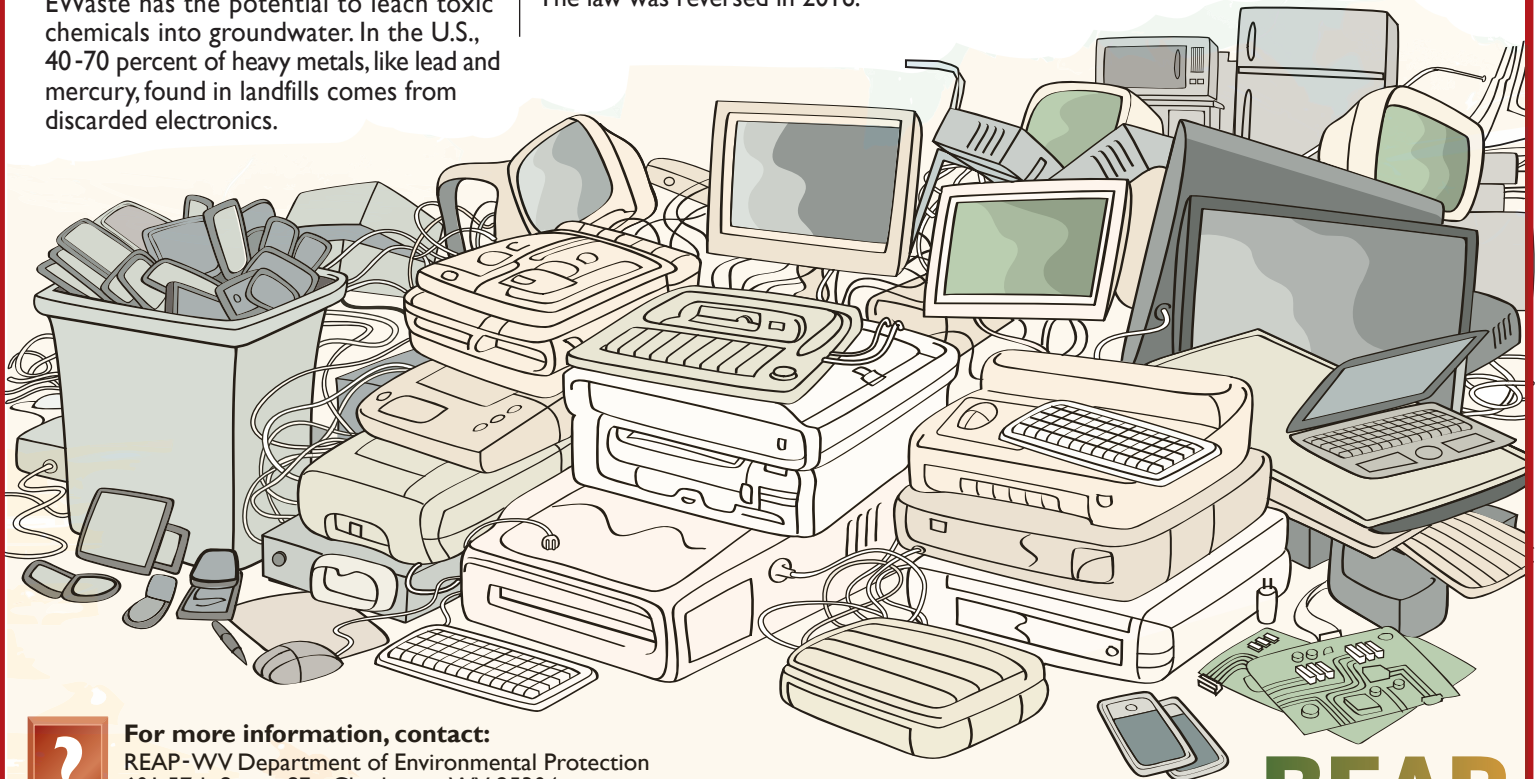
EWaste recycling in West Virginia

Manufacturers like Apple or Sony, who sell or lease electronics in West Virginia, must pay \$5,000 annually to the state if they do not have a takeback or recycling program for their products.

The WVDEP also issues CED recycling grants to cities, county commissions and county solid waste authorities for e-cycling events that divert electronics from the waste stream.

What can we do?

To minimize the effects of EWaste on the environment, consider donating still-usable electronics to a friend, family member, recreation/senior citizen center or a charitable organization such as Goodwill or the Salvation Army, rather than throwing them away. If it no longer works, check for a local e-cycling event or community cleanup in your area. Ask local retailers, such as Best Buy, if they will take back the product at no cost. Some Goodwill stores will recycle old computers. AT&T stores will recycle your old phone.



For more information, contact:

REAP - WV Department of Environmental Protection
601 57th Street SE • Charleston, WV 25304

1-800-322-5530 or <http://www.dep.wv.gov> Type in "Recycling and Waste Reduction" in the search bar

