



**DID YOU KNOW THAT THE OLD TELEVISION
YOU DISCARDED HAS COMPONENTS THAT CAN CAUSE
MENTAL RETARDATION IN CHILDREN?**



Upgrading has become an integral part of our lives: to larger television screens, to smaller MP3 players, to sleeker mobile phones...

Have you ever wondered, all these

AT WHAT COST?

E-Waste: The fastest growing solid waste stream in the world

We live in a fast-paced world and making life easier are a host of technology-based products like televisions, computers, mobile phones, refrigerators, air conditioners, washing machines, scanners, printers, etc. Once these items are discarded, they become e-waste.

These electric and electronic devices contain a complex mixture of materials and components, many of which are highly toxic in nature. When these trashed electronic items are dismantled without effective controls in place, hazardous compounds get released which affects human health and the environment adversely. Components that cannot be recycled are dumped or burned in the open which releases additional toxins into the environment.

Almost 50 million tons of toxic e-waste is produced worldwide annually. Developed nations dump most of their e-waste into the developing nations through illegal routes with India receiving a significant share.

Let's join hands to stop it!





What lies beneath: Toxics inside electronic products and the health hazards they pose

Mercury: Brain disorders, kidney, renal and neurological damage leading to even death

Lead: Learning disabilities, mental retardation, behavioural problems, hearing impairment

Cadmium: Lung damage, fragility of bones, high blood pressure, nerve and brain damage, kidney and liver disease

Chromium: Lung and stomach damage, asthma attack, liver and kidney failure causing even death

Flame retardants: Cancer, affecting brain development, immunity problems, behavioural problems

And the list goes on...

E-waste in India: A growing menace

India generates huge quantities of e-waste – 4.4 lakh tons annually. And thanks to our mindless pursuit of upgraded technology and fancier products, this number is set to go up to 8 lakh tons by 2012. Most of the recycling is done in the informal sector without proper safeguards involving rudimentary processes resulting in extensive damage to humans and the environment.

The workers, mostly women and children, use hazardous processes like acid bath and open burning to recover metals like gold, silver and copper, thereby releasing toxic fumes into the air and contaminating the soil and water. The non-recyclable components and residual chemicals are emptied into open fields and water bodies. Solution to the problem lies in making the companies more responsible about e-waste, developing standards and enacting suitable legislations. It lies in creating awareness at the individual level, in ensuring your full support and participation. And most importantly, **be the change!**

The government and the corporate are the largest consumer of electrical and electronic products and thus the biggest generators of e-waste in India. But individuals like us too contribute increasingly to this hazardous heap.

Time to act:

What you can do about it

REDUCE

Buy reliable products from a good company so that you don't have to throw them away too soon.

Switch to 'greener' computers and other 'greener' products which use less of environmentally hazardous materials.

Prefer upgrading over replacing: For example, adding a new hard drive or additional memory to your old computer or mobile might fulfil your needs.

Consider getting your electronic items repaired instead of trashing them how much ever tempting a newer model may look like.

REUSE

Donate your computer and other electronic goods when you don't want it anymore. Charities, schools or somebody you know might be interested.



REDUCE
REUSE
RECYCLE

Resell your old items by advertising in the classifieds instead of just junking it.

RECYCLE

Find out which companies have 'take back' systems and buy from them.

If your electronic equipment manufacturer has a responsible recycling programme for e-waste, participate in it.

Organise a special e-waste collection event in your office or your community.

Dispose off your e-waste with authorised e-waste recyclers. (Please find the complete list at www.toxicslink.org)

Recycling electronic gadgets will reduce the burden on earth by reducing the energy requirements for virgin mining. Recycling also results in recovery of materials, thus conserving natural resources and reducing energy consumption.





BE THE CHANGE! ACT NOW, BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!!

For your sake, if you see large quantities of e-waste being treated in your neighbourhood, inform us.
Call us at 011 24328006 or email us at **info@toxicslink.org**

About us

Toxics Link, an environmental NGO, is dedicated to bringing toxics related information into the public domain. We work on issues like hazardous waste management, international waste trade, pesticide and food safety among others. Over the years, we have been instrumental in directing policy makers towards pro people and environment friendly legislations. For more information, log on to **www.toxicslink.org**

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