
INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Ministry of Environment

E-WASTE RECYCLING DIVERTS WASTE FROM LANDFILLS

VICTORIA – As British Columbians purchase new computers and electronics this Christmas season, B.C.'s new e-waste recycling program has already diverted more than 1.8 million kilograms of electronic waste from landfills since the industry-led program began just three months ago.

The government of British Columbia makes industry responsible for collecting and recycling the electronic products they manufacturer and sell. There are currently two industry groups operating programs in B.C. The Electronics Stewardship Association of B.C. represents the majority of electronics producers selling computers, monitors, desktop printers and TVs. The Western Canada Computer Industry Association also has an approved product stewardship plan for electronics.

The 1.8 million kilograms of electronic waste includes approximately 10,000 televisions, 60,000 computer monitors, 20,000 CPUs and 30,000 printers that have been diverted from landfills

Electronic waste contains toxic metals like lead, mercury and cadmium, which can end up in surface and groundwater. Because those materials are valuable and reusable, old electronics are often illegally exported for salvage to developing countries with very poor labour practices. B.C.'s new regulations require industry to have safeguards in place to prevent this from happening.

Electronic waste recycling continues to expand across British Columbia as the number of units diverted from landfills increases and more collection sites for customers are opened across the province.

Metal and plastic recovery and reuse supports a secondary processing industry and will eventually lead to the elimination of e-waste from municipal landfills. Visit www.recycling.gov.bc.ca to learn more about electronic product stewardship in B.C.

In addition to electronics, British Columbia has industry-led product stewardship programs for paint, oil, beverage containers, tires, pharmaceuticals, pesticides, gasoline, solvents and flammable liquids. B.C. continues to develop new programs and intends to add two more product categories to industry-led stewardship in 2008.

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