



Managing Electronic Wastes Part II

As was established in the previous article on electronic waste or e-waste poses serious problems to the environment and human health. For this reason, it is essential that e-waste be properly managed to protect our environment and preserve human life.

The Basel Convention

The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal was adopted on March 22, 1989, in Basel, Switzerland. The main objective of the Convention is to protect human health and the environment against the effects of hazardous wastes. E-waste is considered hazardous waste, and any country that signs on to the Basel Convention agrees to put measures in place to reduce the generation of hazardous waste and promote the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes.

Guyana signed on to the Basel Convention on April 04, 2001, and the Environmental Protection Agency is both the Focal Point and Competent Authority of the Convention in Guyana. In this regard, the Agency is responsible for ensuring the proper management of hazardous wastes, including e-waste, in Guyana.

Environmental Guidelines

Environmental Guidelines have been developed on the Management and Export of Electronic Wastes. These guidelines promote the reuse of e-waste since, at present, since there is no facility within the country that treats, recycles or disposes of e-waste. As such, the current recommendation for the management of e-waste is to store all e-wastes properly until a suitable method of disposal is available locally.

- Store in a fully enclosed building.
- Store in a way that prevents contact with environmental elements and breakage.
- Store in an area that is inaccessible to the public.



- Have an emergency plan in place to cater for any breakage of Cathode Ray Tubes (CRT)
- Never touch or pick up glass from broken CRT without wearing appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- **Remember once e-wastes remain intact, they will not cause harm to humans or the environment.**

It is also advised to have a CRT Spill Kit available in case of any breakage. CRTs which are found in computers and televisions are toxic because of the presence of phosphorous and lead. The Spill Kit should include: *Hand held broom, Small plastic bag, Dust pan, Disposable Dust mask, Latex gloves.*

If a spill should occur, the following steps should be taken to clean up:

1. Isolate the area.
2. Put on PPE.
3. Use broom & dust pan to all glass.
4. Place in bag (bag must be in plastic container).
5. Spray area with water and wipe up any residue with paper towel.
6. Throw gloves, mask & towel in garbage.
7. Store broken glass. **DO NOT DISCARD IN TRASH!**



You can share ideas and questions by sending letters to: “Our Earth, Our Environment”, C/o EIT Division, Environmental Protection Agency, Ganges Street, Sophia, GEORGETOWN or email eit.epaguyana@gmail.com.