

More than 140,000 tonnes of computer components, electronics, and appliances accumulate in Canadian landfills each year. That is enough to fill up the Toronto Skydome every 15 years! <sup>1</sup>

### **Types of Electronic Waste**

- Computers
- Radios
- Cell Phones
- VCRs
- Fax Machines
- Projectors
- Testing Equipment
- TVs
- Telephones
- Computer Accessories



## **RESOURCES: ELECTRONICS**

### **Problems with Electronic Waste**

Hazardous substances (i.e. lead, cadmium, and mercury) in electronics can:

Leach into groundwater, contaminating drinking water, invading fish populations, wildlife habitat, and potentially enter the human population.

Lead to increased human exposure causing subtle neurobehavioural effects for lead, chronic kidney damage for cadmium, and sensory or neurological impairments for mercury.<sup>2</sup>

### **Electronics Stewardship Program**

Alberta has started an electronics recycling program to help keep e-waste out of our landfills. Collection sites and drop-off points for e-waste now exist across the Province. For a list of certified recyclers or for more information about this program you can visit [Green Calgary's Online Recycling Directory](#), or the [Alberta Recycling Management Authority website](#).

## OPTIONS FOR ELECTRONIC WASTE

- Consider leasing equipment; this way when you upgrade, the old unit is the suppliers' responsibility.
- Upgrading current computers, repairing broken electronics, or purchasing refurbished electronics/ computers are alternatives to buying new if the latest technology is not needed. These will save money and reduce waste.
- Donate or sell your old working computers, computer parts, or electronics to local charitable organizations.
- List it on the [Calgary Materials Exchange website](#); another project participant could probably make use of it.
- See if your retailer/manufacturer has a “take-back” option for their products.
- If you have no other option, take your used computers and electronics to a local recycler.

For a list of companies that can recycle or provide reuse avenues for your old electronics please visit our [online recycling directory](#), or for further information please [email](#) Green Calgary's Commercial Environmental Services program or visit our [website](#).

## REFERENCES

1 Source: Environment Canada.

[http://www.ec.gc.ca/envirozine/english/issues/33/feature1\\_e.cfm](http://www.ec.gc.ca/envirozine/english/issues/33/feature1_e.cfm) (Last Accessed July 27, 2009).

2 Source: Greenpeace Int'l.

<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/campaigns/toxics/electronics/what-s-in-electronic-devices> (Last Accessed July 27, 2009).