



Waste of the 21st Century

More than 140 000 tonnes of computer equipment, phones, televisions, stereos, and small home appliances accumulate in Canadian landfills each year.

In our techno-world it is not at all strange to us to see headlines advertising a new technology. Technology and the electronics that come along with it are ever changing and advancing. These changes are (for the most part) great for our society, but one thing that people rarely think about when they go to upgrade their cell phone, or buy a computer is where will there old ones go. We know to recycle bottles, and use both sides of our paper but most people don't know where to get rid of their old electronics. Some end up in the back corner of junk drawers and others end up in landfills.

What can you do?

Nova Scotia has set up a ban on electronics in landfills. The government of Nova Scotia has partnered with the Atlantic Canada Electronic Stewardship to try and help keep e-waste from reaching our landfills. The ACES mission is to operate a sustainable and efficient electronics collection and recycling program to divert end-of-life electronic products from export or landfill in full compliance to local, provincial and federal requirements. There are 36 ACES drop off centers around Nova Scotia where you can take your e-waste and drop it off free of charge. (For Locations please visit

<http://www.acestewardship.ca/consumers/dropofflocations>). There are other options available for unused cell phones and used printer cartridges. Some charities and organizations collect cell phone and ink cartridges and the funds generated go toward their programs Cell phone can be donated to the Diabetes association or Feed Nova Scotia, and ink Cartridges to the Diabetes association. The Halifax regional municipality has a list of alternatives to a land fill, for the full list please visit <http://www.halifax.ca/wrms/alternatives.html>. The most important thing is to know what can be thrown out, recycled or reused.

What is SMU doing?

Saint Mary's has set up a recycling room which is used for a drop-off site for e-waste in Hen Ally 111. This insures that your unwanted electronics are getting disposed of properly, and you don't have to find a way to get to one of the HRM drop-off sites. The recycling room also has a bin for empty ink and toner cartridges. Near the residence security desk there is a bin for clothing and household items that are no longer wanted and at the end of the school year SMUES holds a Dump and Run where you can donate items and keep them from reaching the landfills. In the Student Loyola (by the Tim Hortons) there is a bin where you can drop printer cartridges and small electronics like mp3 players, phones.

If you have any questions about e-waste or where to recycle it, feel free to contact sustainability@smu.ca

Sources :

<http://www.halifax.ca/wrms/alternatives.htm>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electronic_waste
<http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/waste/ewaste.asp>
http://www.ec.gc.ca/EnviroZine/english/issues/33/feature1_e.cfm
<http://www.acestewardship.ca/consumers/dropofflocations>

