

A MESSAGE FROM KEN ROBINSON

*Master Restorer
Vice President of Marketing
& Field Operations*

The fire is out and the ashes have settled. And as the insured starts to get their life back together they realize that the ashes have actually settled on all of their electronic equipment, and they are going to need to be replaced. They are not worth repairing because replacement is cheaper. Not only cheaper, but less than the original cost with twice the features. Looks like a win – win, well not exactly. That old equipment is on it's way to the landfill, or so you would think.



When a contractor needs to get rid of a large quantity of garbage from a fire or water claim, they hire a waste handler to provide a large garbage bin for the waste. The contractors' employees fill the bins and the

hauler takes it away, but to where? Not to the North Pole, but back to a transfer station where the garbage gets sorted and parted off to other people and other places. The garbage trail is long and can include many middlemen, as it is goes to the highest bidder or the cheapest dump. But how do we know it was handled properly or ethically.

This month I hope to shed some light on what happens to all the VCR's, TV's, stereos, phones and computers at the end of their life cycle. Particularly if handled improperly.

DISPOSAL OF WASTE ELECTRONIC AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT (WEEE)

By Jessica Campbell

In the past several years, there has been a lot of attention paid to the disposal of waste electronic and electrical equipment (often called WEEE). This increased focus is due to a number of factors:

- 1) The increase in the amount of this waste that requires disposal. **FACT:** According to Environment Canada, more than 140,000 tonnes of computer equipment, phones, televisions, stereos and small home appliances accumulates in Canadian landfills each year.
- 2) Many of these wastes are toxic, containing lead, cadmium, chromium, arsenic and mercury.
- 3) Documentary evidence that disassembly of WEEE exported from Canada and the US to China is discarded in rural riverbeds exposing children directly to toxic chemicals in the waste stream. These chemicals are contaminating community drinking water.



Jessica Campbell MSc., CEA

In response to these factors, there have been new regulations relating to waste management of electronics and electronic equipment both in Canada and the US. The Canadian approach has been to create stewardship programs for waste electronic and electronic equipment. A stewardship program's aim is to place the responsibility

or disposal on the manufacturer or first importer of the good before it becomes waste. These programs are provincially run and are at different stages of development across Canada. The unifying features of the programs include:

- 1) An advance disposal fee is paid by the consumer at the time of purchase of the equipment.

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Disposal of Waste and Electrical Equipment

- 2) The advance disposal fees fund a disposal system for the management of the “end of life” of the equipment.

In most cases the province approves disposal sites and the fees paid by the consumer in part or totally fund the collection and disposal. Participation in these programs is in everyone’s best interest!

Where stewardship programs are not yet in place it is important to dispose of this equipment ethically and legally. First, is the equipment functioning? If so, there may be charities who want the equipment. Many municipalities’ host web sites listing local charities who will accept used electronic equipment. Beware of the company that will take them for shipment overseas, as it is likely that these wastes will end up in China contaminating children and water supplies. Second, some of the equipment is hazardous (example: lead frit in television and computer monitors and cathode ray tubes). These wastes or equipment containing these wastes are hazardous and must be sent to a facility licensed to accept electronic or hazardous waste where the contaminants will be managed appropriately and legally. Improper disposal in a non-hazardous waste landfill could not only contaminate the land but lead to legal charges and associated costs.



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Waste Electronic Equipment (WEEE)

The best methods to reduce the impact of WEEE on the environment are:

Procurement of electronic equipment to reduce the generation of WEEE.

- Buy durable electronics that will last.
- Buy “upgradeable” electronics that can be upgraded easily with technological advances.
- Buy from manufacturers who support and participate in a take-back or recycling program.

Managing customer waste streams to find reuse and recycle options for WEEE.

Get involved and participate in provincial stewardship programs where they exist. Where programs are not yet established, find reuse and recycle options for WEEE. Ask questions, ensure WEEE is not being shipped overseas. Contacts who may be of assistance in finding reuse and recycle options include:

- Computers for Schools Program – www.schoolnet.ca
- Electronic Product Recovery – www.epr.org
- Environment Canada – www.ec.gc.ca
- InKind Canada – www.inkindcanada.ca
- Reboot Canada – www.reboot.on.ca
- Waste Reduction Week Canada – www.wrwc.ca
- Provincial Recycling Councils across Canada:

Provincial Recycling Councils

Yukon Territory – Raven Recycling

– Email: education@ravenrecycling.org

Northwest Territories – Inuvik Recycling Society

– Email: recycle@northwestel.net

Nunavut Territory – Iqaluit – Email: d.reist@city.iqaluit.nu.ca

British Columbia – RCBC – Email: tracey@rcbc.bc.ca

Alberta – Recycling Council of Alberta – Email: info@recycle.ab.ca

Saskatchewan – SWRC – Email: info@saskwastereduction.ca

Manitoba – RCM – Email: wrrw@resourceconservation.mb.ca

Ontario – RCO – Email: wrrw@rco.on.ca

Quebec – RRQ – Email: info@reseaureressources.org

New Brunswick – NBSWA – Email: nbswa@nbnet.nb.ca

Nova Scotia – Clean Nova Scotia – Email: riddell@clean.ns.ca

Prince Edward Island – IWMC – Email: info@iwmc.pe.ca

Newfoundland and Labrador – MMSB – Email: dpenney@mmsb.nf.ca

Restoration and other contractors wanting to ensure the proper disposal of WEEE materials need to make certain a reputable waste handler is selected. Recommended recyclers that are part of the BAN pledge program can be found at www.ban.org/pledge1.html. The recycler must guarantee total destruction of the computer memory prior to disposal or re-use, either by shredding or by data wiping software. In our industry we need to be aware of this problem and also be willing to be part of the solution.

CSI – Risk Free Services

CSI stands for Completion Services Inc. It is an independent corporation owned and funded by all authorized Paul Davis Restoration’s offices.

This warranty is unique in our industry as it allows us to provide our services risk-free.

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Paul Davis Systems has integrated Assured Software’s Pack-Out Inventory Program with our PDS pack-out and cleaning procedures. After contents leave the insured’s property we are able to provide a detailed content listing with integrated photos.

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PDS of Halifax/Dartmouth certified project managers will provide accurate and professional estimates within 48 hours of a loss.



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DID YOU KNOW?

If leaves, dirt and other debris are not cleared from gutters and downspouts before winter, ice damming may occur.

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