



# FACT SHEET: E-WASTE DISPOSAL

**CHINA E-WASTE OPPORTUNITIES**

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Seventy percent of the world's annual 500 million tons of electronic waste ends up in China. China has already become the world's second largest producer of electronic waste, producing 2.3 million tons in 2011, which is second only to the 3 million tons produced by the United States. The amount of electronic waste is expected to increase as the Chinese economy grows. The combination of strict environmental laws and high labor costs in developed countries is causing more and more e-waste to end up in developing countries like China both legally and illegally. Disposal of electronic waste can create jobs and recycle valuable metals but also harm humans and the environment by releasing pollutants. Legislation banning importation and requiring proper disposal of indigenous waste as well as government subsidies for proper disposal have recently been introduced and are expected to strengthen the management of E-waste. This legislation will also provide for technical support and subsidies to qualified enterprises to increase the recycling rate of imported e-waste.

China is a major producing and consuming country of electrical and electronic products. There are hundreds of millions of electrical and electronic products such as TV sets, refrigerators, washing machines, air conditioners, and computers produced annually. In 2012, the output of China's TV sets, refrigerators, washing machines, air conditioners, and computers was 120 million, 105 million, 66.71 million, 130 million, and 320 million sets respectively.

The recycling value of these appliances is considerable, which needs to be fully developed. It was expected that by 2016, the generating volume of China's e-wastes will be over 5 million tons. In the next few years, the annual number of major waste electrical and electronic products in China will be over 100 million units. If appropriate recycling is developed, millions of tons of resources such as noble metals, non-ferrous metals, and engineered plastics will be made available.

There is a significant Chinese market for e-waste recycling, disposal enterprises, and e-waste disposal equipment manufacturers. In 2012, China's e-waste disposal industry exceeded 3 billion RMB (480 million USD) in profits. According to the *12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan for Hazardous Waste Control*, the combined total investment for key projects for hazardous waste is 26.1 billion RMB (4.2 billion USD), among that, the e-waste will gain major attention. It is expected that by 2017, the profit of China's e-waste disposal industry will exceed 10 billion RMB (1.61 billion USD).

China continuously improves e-waste recycling and comprehensive utilization management systems, introducing a series of encouraging and stimulus policies. China's new policy and regulation accelerated the centralized recycling and dismantling disposal of waste electrical and electronic products, established 900 regular recycling enterprises, with recycling locations over 20,000. The dismantling and in-depth utilization technologies are still in process of maturing. Environmental pollution problems caused by e-waste disposal are still prevalent in many provinces. The newly released Soil Pollution Action Plan (year of 2016) also attributed E-waste disposal as one of the major sources of soil contamination and will strengthen the effort to find technical solutions on E-waste recovery to promote recycling. This reality shows that there are large potential opportunities for American companies with e-waste recycling technologies and experiences to tap into the Chinese market.