

E-waste becoming a health hazard

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"E-trash" is creating an increasing health hazard across the nation, with the U.S. Senate trying to find a national solution.

The National Safety Council estimates 50 million computers a year become obsolete, many left in landfills where, scientists fear, the metallic parts may poison the environment, the Orlando (Fla.) Sentinel reported Monday.

Older, bulky televisions and computer monitors contain as many as 5 pounds of lead, a potentially hazardous metal, Blanche Hardy, director of environmental services in Florida's Lake County, told the newspaper.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said consumer electronics account for less than 4 percent of the nation's municipal solid waste, but account for approximately 40 percent of the lead in landfills.

People in the United States own an estimated 2 billion pieces of electronic equipment -- about 25 items per household.

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