

## *UN warns of environmental e-waste catastrophe*



The United Nations has issued a stark warning to consumers worldwide.

The volume of electronics we are throwing away is creating an "environmental catastrophe". We are disposing of record amounts of "e-waste". The UN defines electronics as anything with a plug or a battery, and often contains toxic chemicals and substances, such as lead and mercury. E-waste includes discarded cellphones, refrigerators and e-cigarettes. The UN Global E-waste Monitor has reported that in 2022, the world generated a mind-blowing 62 million tons of e-waste. CNN said this waste could, "fill more than 1.5 million 40-ton trucks which, if placed bumper-to-bumper, could...wrap around the Equator."

Most e-waste comes from developed countries. A lot of *Harder* countries for recycling. However, these countries lack the technology and resources to dispose of it in a way that minimizes environmental damage. The sheer volume of waste is creating a plethora of health problems. Dumped electronics are poisoning rivers and seas. A disturbing 58 tons of mercury entered the environment last year. Some of this enters the food chain. The UN blamed manufacturers for showing "a lack of duty of care" by failing to accept responsibility for what happens to their products. It also blamed consumers, saying, "it's just a few clicks" to buy electronics, but "it's far more difficult to dispose of them."

Sources: [cnn.com](https://www.cnn.com) / [aljazeera.com](https://www.aljazeera.com) / [foxnews.com/breakingnewsenglish.com](https://www.foxnews.com/breakingnewsenglish)

### DO YOU AGREE?

*"We should have to pay when we throw anything away."*

## TRUE? FALSE?

According to the article, identify whether the statements are true or false.

- 1) The UN has issued its highest warning regarding the disposal of e-waste. T / F
- 2) The UN said there are too many records in the e-waste. T / F
- 3) The UN said electronics was anything with a plug or a battery. T / F
- 4) The UN said the amount of e-waste we produce could fill the equator. T / F
- 5) Poorer countries are responsible for most of the world's e-waste. T / F
- 6) The e-waste we are creating is causing many health problems. T / F
- 7) The UN said 58 tons of mercury enters the food chain every year. T / F
- 8) The UN blamed customers and manufacturers for the e-waste. T / F

## SYNONYM MATCH

(The words in bold are from the news article.)

- |                      |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. <b>stark</b>      | a. amenities    |
| 2. <b>volume</b>     | b. tossed out   |
| 3. <b>toxic</b>      | c. keeps down   |
| 4. <b>discarded</b>  | d. amount       |
| 5. <b>placed</b>     | e. considerably |
| 6. <b>resources</b>  | f. positioned   |
| 7. <b>minimizes</b>  | g. miserable    |
| 8. <b>plethora</b>   | h. worrying     |
| 9. <b>disturbing</b> | i. poisonous    |
| 10. far              | j. abundance    |

## DISCUSS MORE

- 1) How do you get rid of the electronics you throw away?
- 2) How bad a refrigerator is for the environment?
- 3) What electronics do we really need?
- 4) How can we make electronics less harmful to the environment?
- 5) Should we all buy used or reconditioned electronics?
- 6) What happens when the landfills are full of waste?
- 7) How do you feel when you see discarded electronics in the countryside?
- 8) What is the best way to discard electronics?
- 9) Should developed countries recycle their own discarded electronics?
- 10) What health problems do discarded electronics cause?

## SUMMARY

Look at the word list in Synonym Match. Choose at least three words to create three sentences about today's topic.