



Innovations

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The Dangers of E-Waste and How to Properly Recycle Electronics

Today many businesses and individuals are making an effort to use less energy and recycle everything from paper to plastic water bottles. What many people – and companies – don't think about, however, are the dangers of e-waste.

There are a lot of items people don't think to recycle – like wine corks and eyeglasses – that they should. A bigger problem is when we toss out electronics without considering how they might negatively impact the environment.

THE DANGERS OF E-WASTE TO THE ENVIRONMENT

Because most people don't throw away a laptop every day, we often don't think of them as huge waste creators. However, approximately two to five percent of solid waste in the U.S. is made up of e-waste. A study backed by the United Nations estimated that in 2016 alone, the amount of electronic waste in the world grew to an alarming 45 million tons. The problem isn't simply that electronic items take up space in landfills; if they're not disposed of properly, they actually harm the environment.

When computers, cell phones, chargers, printers, and other electronic equipment get dumped into landfills, they don't decompose. Instead, they release a lot of toxic chemicals that can seep into the soil and then into the groundwater supply. These ingredients include lead, barium, lithium, mercury, polybrominated flame retardants, and polyvinyl chloride. They leach out of the insides of the electronic devices, as well as from

their exterior plastic casings.

The World Health Organization has specifically called out electronic waste as a threat to children's health. Some of the harm results from electronic waste that is dumped close to residential areas.

RAW MATERIALS IN E-WASTE

In addition to creating a steady stream of toxins that flow into our environment (and eventually, into our



bodies), tossing away electronic devices wastes a huge amount of raw materials that could be recycled. These include metals such as palladium, platinum, copper, and even silver and gold.

How large is this problem? Only 20 percent of the world's e-waste is being recycled. That same United Nations study found that by not recycling electronic devices, consumers wasted \$64.61 billion dollars of raw materials in 2016.

HOW TO RECYCLE ELECTRONICS

Many people are set up to recycle their aluminum cans and water bottles but are at a loss when it comes to figuring out how to recycle e-waste. Some electronics retailers have kiosks where you can drop unwanted electronic items and chargers. You might also have municipal programs for e-waste recycling.

In addition to this, businesses like Paper Tiger provide e-waste recycling services for a wide variety of items. Drop-off is free and convenient.

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WHAT ITEMS SHOULD BE RECYCLED?

Here is a list of common e-waste items that should be included in your personal or business e-waste recycling plan:

Computers, cell phones, and tablets. This includes monitors and hard drive units as well as laptops. Any device with sensitive data on it should be wiped clean before being turned in for recycling to maintain your privacy and security.

Computer accessories. Anything that can be attached or connected to your computer – either wirelessly or with a cord – can be recycled. This includes printers, scanners, computer mice and keyboards. Fax machines and copiers should also be responsibly recycled.

Chargers and cables. It’s easy to throw out a stray computer cable or battered cell phone charger, but these items should be put aside and saved for e-waste recycling.

Audio/Visual equipment. You should recycle any AV or television equipment, including projection equipment and cable/satellite boxes.

Data center equipment. This includes servers, server racks, power distribution units, mainframe computer equipment, and motor generator sets.

If you have any questions about what items can be recycled, contact your local e-waste recycling center and ask to be certain. The dangers of e-waste are real. By making a plan and taking the time to recycle all of your e-waste responsibly, you’ll not only be freeing up room in landfills, you’ll also be helping Mother Earth.

**By Rich Martin and John Klise
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Technology Tidbits

4 Ways Your Employees Will Invite Hackers Into Your Network

Cyber security is a complicated issue, no matter how you slice it, but one of the surest ways to reduce your risk and strengthen your defenses against hackers is to educate your team. Forewarned is forearmed, so make sure they fully understand the risks associated with the most common social engineering strategies. **Phishing**, the most prevalent, uses e-mails, chats or web ads impersonating trusted entities to trick employees into clicking malicious links. **Baiting** is similar, but purports to offer something enticing, such as a music or movie download, to deliver malware onto your system. **Quid pro quo** hackers offer a “service” in exchange for access to private data, such as an employee’s login credentials. **Tailgating** is when an unauthorized person physically follows one of your employees into a restricted area or asks to “borrow” their device for a bit and steals all the info they need directly.

Make sure your team is on the lookout for these malicious techniques, and you’ll be that much more secure.

– *SmallBizTrends.com, 9/20/2018*

Use These 3 Strategies To Break Your Bad Tech Habits

If you’re trying to kick an addiction to your smartphone and other addictive tech, and you’re tempted to turn to them whenever you feel uncomfortable or anxious, don’t give up. Instead of seeking a distraction whenever you feel bored – for example, checking your e-mail for the 10th time or logging in to Facebook – learn to embrace silence, and yes, even boredom. If you find yourself checking your phone too much at work, set physical boundaries to restrict yourself. Put it in your desk or another place that adds an extra step to accessing it. The next time you have downtime, instead of whipping out your device right away, mull over a specific problem or idea on your own – you might be surprised what you discover.

– *Inc.com, 7/20/2018*

On The Lighter Side

Unknown Reindeer

The game show contestant was only 200 points behind the leader and about to answer the final question - worth 500 points!

"To be today's champion," the show's smiling host intoned, "name two of Santa's reindeer."

The contestant, a man in his early thirties, gave a sigh of relief, gratified that he had drawn such an easy question. "Rudolph!" he said confidently, "and...Olive!"

The studio audience started to applaud (like the little sign above their heads said to do), but the clapping quickly faded into mumbling, and the confused host replied, "Yes, we'll accept Rudolph, but could you please explain... 'Olive?!?'"

"You know," the man circled his hand forward impatiently and began to sing, "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer - had a very shiny nose. And if you ever saw it, you would even say it glowed. *Olive,* the other reindeer..."

Silly Turkey

It was Christmas Eve and, while at the meat counter, a woman was anxiously picking over the last few remaining turkeys in the hope of finding a large one.

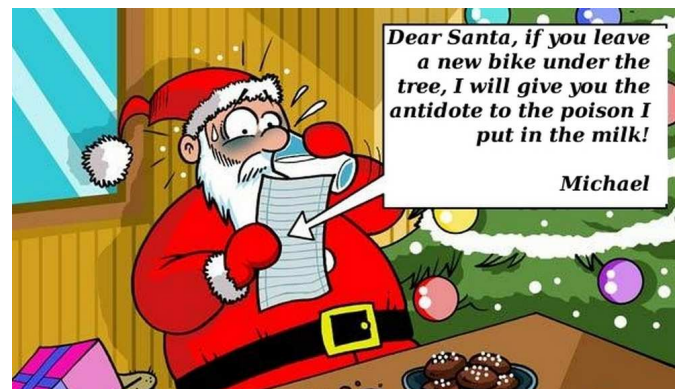
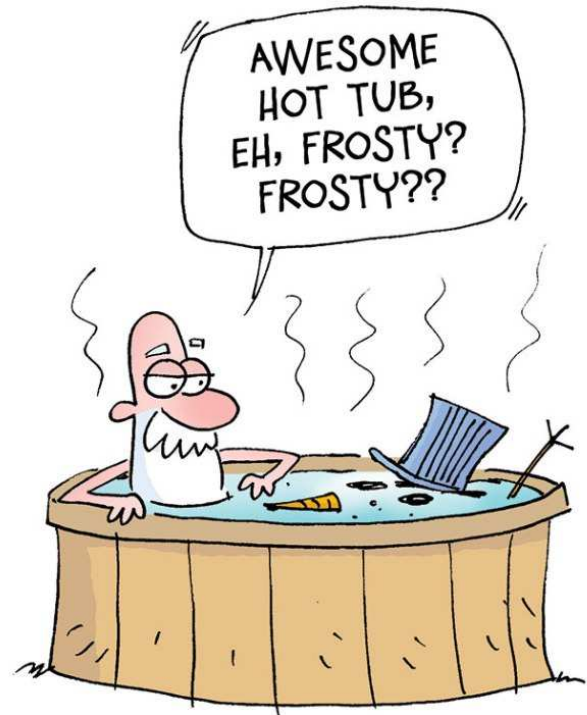
In desperation she called over a shop assistant and asked, "Excuse me. Do these turkeys get any bigger?"

"No, madam," he replied... "they're all dead."

Slippery Sheep

One Christmas, Joe and Peter built a skating rink in the middle of a field. A shepherd leading his flock decided to take a shortcut across the rink. The sheep, however, were afraid of the ice and wouldn't cross it. Desperate, the shepherd began tugging them to the other side.

"Look at that," remarked Peter to Joe, "That guy is trying to pull the wool over our ice!"



December 2018



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Shiny New Gadget of the Month

The Casio Pro Trek Smart A Watch Built For Adventure

Today, a lover of the outdoors needs to demand more from their devices if they're going to get the most out of their adventures. The best tech boasts robust, easy-to-use features for when you need them but gets out of the way, leaving you to focus on the grandeur surrounding you. Luckily, the Casio Pro Trek Smart WSD-F20ABU watch does exactly that in one attractive, intelligent package. Every capability you'd expect from an outdoors-focused device is overhauled here - from the altimeter to the barometer and even the feature-rich compass. Perhaps the best tool is the full-color map you can display on its face, which detects and displays changes in the atmosphere and weather up to the minute. If you're looking for a sturdy, powerful tool to bring along on your next excursion, it'd be tough to do better than this.



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