

Summary

The purpose of this work is to research into what equipment is electric and electronic waste and into which categories are they distributed. Also to give an overview of legislation in Estonia and the European Union that regulates the disposal of electrical and electronic waste.

One of the biggest global problems is the export of electrical and electronic waste into Third World countries. Import of hazardous waste causes serious environmental and health issues. Although such action is gaining more widespread prohibition, illegal import of such waste is still present.

In First World countries the liability for disposing of such waste lies on the manufacturer or importer of the product. Countries that have policies like that include the EU, North and South American countries. When it comes to Third World countries there are only few who adhere to the same policy.

There are different technologies being used for recycling of electrical and electronic waste like: magnetic separation, eddy current separation, air current separation, corona electrostatic separation, vacuum metallurgy separation and others. Generally recycling of e-waste consists of the following: crushing, physical separation and further processing of the elements.

The main problem these days is that millions of electronic products are being produced without facilitating their disposal. Objectives for the future should be designing new handling practices and solutions. The production of electronic devices should be made more environmentally friendly and the import of electrical and electronic waste to Third World countries should be avoided. To decrease environmental pollution the lifecycle of the average electronic equipment should be extended.