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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

JULY 25, 2000

4:44 PM

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## Landfilling A Mile-High Pile Of E-Waste

Website provides opportunity for consumers to express concerns to high-tech companies about electronic waste

SAN JOSE, CA - July 25 - As recycling activists gather in Sacramento to find solutions to solve the growing piles of electronic waste, the Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition's (SVTC) website is making it possible for everyone to write to Hewlett-Packard, Apple, IBM, Intel, Compaq and Dell and ask about the company's computer recycling, and "green design" programs.

As part of its Clean Computer Campaign, the 4 sample letters ([http://www.svfc.org/cleancc/4ht\\_letters.htm](http://www.svfc.org/cleancc/4ht_letters.htm)) cover topics computer recycling, computer takeback, green design, and extended producer responsibility.

Computer waste is growing at an alarming rate. More than 315 million computers will become obsolete during the next four years. This will generate more than 1 billion pounds of lead waste. "Computer recycling is not working. If everyone one threw out their computers at once, we would have a one mile high waste mountain of junked computers the size of a football field, said Leslie Byster SVTC Communications Director.

"We think that computer companies need to hear from consumers about the desire and need for cleaner product design and take back programs for recycling", said Ted Smith, Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition Executive Director and a speaker at the Sacramento conference "Turning Challenges into Opportunities" sponsored by the California Resource Recovery Association.

The conference covers a variety of topics including "Defunct Electronics--who is responsible?" The debate about who is responsible for the reuse and the recycling of consumer electronics is not just a local issue, (such as banning electronic products from landfills or increased garbage rates) but has gained international attention with the European Union's Draft Directive on Waste from Electronic and Electrical Equipment which would require manufacturers to take back their defunct products. The US Trade Representative (USTR) -- at the request of the American Electronics Association (AEA), the largest trade association of the electronics industry with more than 3000 members -- has been lobbying against the WEEE Directive. The AEA is using international trade law and the World Trade Organization as weapons to undermine important and beneficial initiative and to dictate global health and environmental policy to protect the economic interests of its members.

"We hope that this letter-writing initiative and will let companies know that consumers are aware of these issues and will help protect environmental health and safety by phasing out toxic chemicals in computers, by promoting computer take back and recycling and by

establishing a framework for Extended Producer Responsibility," continued Smith.

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For more information:

Toxics and hazards in e-waste: Just Say No to E-Waste!  
<http://www.svtc.org/cleancc/ecoc.htm>

Congressional letter to Vice-President Gore: Two US Reps. (George Miller (D-CA) and Bernie Sanders (D-VT) and US Sen. Paul Wellstone (D-MN) wrote a letter to Vice President Gore urging him to defend the EU Directive. Specifically, they asked the Vice-President to "ensure that the European Union is allowed to set its own environmental and health standards, unhindered by United States Trade Representative opposition". [http://www.svtc.org/cleancc/congletter\\_mav00.htm](http://www.svtc.org/cleancc/congletter_mav00.htm)

1999 Report card ranking 21 companies on hazardous materials use policies, take back policies and product upgradability.

letter to Vice-President Gore signed by hundreds  
<http://www.svtc.org/cleancc/weeeustr.htm>

the European Environmental Bureau's position of the WEEE Directive  
<http://www.greenchannel.com>

the position of the American Electronics Association  
<http://www.svtc.org/cleancc/weeeaea.htm>

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