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**Press Release**

**August 2020**

**3 IN 5 YOUNG AMERICANS DON’T KNOW WHAT E-WASTE IS, LEADING 60% OF THEM TO THROW ELECTRONICS IN THE TRASH**

* 57% of Millennials, Gen-Z are unaware that e-waste is a significant contributor to toxic waste
* 60% threw away electronics between March and June 2020, with the most highly disposed items being mobile phones, headphones and charging cords
* Of those throwing out e-waste, 44% report it was due to not knowing how to properly dispose of it

**KENNESAW, GA – August 4, 2020 –** In 2019, electronic waste contributed to a record-high amount of e-waste generated worldwide at [53.6 million metric tons](https://www.theverge.com/21309776/record-amount-ewaste-2019-global-report-environment-health), comprising a staggering 70% of the world’s toxic waste. As technology use and new production continues to rise worldwide, these figures are anticipated to rise even higher in years to come.

To explore this further, tech reseller, [Decluttr](https://www.decluttr.com/), commissioned a July 2020 survey of America’s most heavy technology adopters, Generation Z (18-22) and Millennials (23-38). The survey of 1,332 Millennials and Gen-Zers evaluated the generations’ current concern for the environment and how electronic waste fits into their other eco-conscious behaviors.

**Environmental sustainability remains a top priority for young Americans, despite the economic downturn of 2020**

Despite the dire circumstances faced by countries around the world in the first half of 2020, environmental awareness and concern does not appear to have swayed. According to the survey, 65% of young Americans’ feel just as concerned about the environment as they did 6 months prior. In fact, even with the downturn of the U.S. economy, a significant amount of young Americans say environmental sustainability (71%) is more important to them than economic growth (29%).

On the contrary, businesses are [reportedly reprioritizing](https://www.wsj.com/articles/sustainability-was-corporate-americas-buzzword-this-crisis-changes-that-11588352181) more quickly, with many cutting back on green initiatives due to the state of the economy. Yet, this shift is unlikely to sit well with many young Americans; 85% are concerned that some brands and companies have temporarily halted their sustainability efforts in order to cope with the economic effects of the pandemic and

69% would boycott a brand if they found out they were not following environmentally sound business practices.

**Young Americans are taking action, but electronic waste represents a blindspot that requires further education**

When it comes to putting beliefs into practice, Millennials and Gen-Zers are taking multiple measures in an effort to help the environment on a daily basis . The survey indicated that they regularly recycle (90%), compost (45%) and shop zero plastic (26%). Their dedication to the environment also doesn’t stop at accountability for their own actions, they’re also unwilling to tolerate being in a relationship with someone who doesn’t share their concerns. 47% of young Americans say they wouldn’t consider dating someone who didn’t recycle and 45% wouldn’t date someone who used an excess of plastic.

Yet despite good intentions, many are not aware of the extent to which e-waste is an environmental concern or the proper measures needed to reduce it. 60% of young people are unfamiliar with the term, ‘e-waste,’ yet 63% contribute to it. What’s most concerning is that 57% are not aware that electronic waste is a significant contributor to toxic waste, illustrating the dire need for further education. It’s estimated that [130 million smartphones are disposed of](https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-to-reduce-the-toxic-impact-of-your-ex-smartphone/) annually, which are typically burned in incinerators, releasing harmful metals into the atmosphere such as lead, mercury and arsenic. These toxins contaminate the land, air and water, affecting the health and well-being of animals, plants and humans.

Yet, with many Americans cleaning out their homes while on lockdown, the survey results suggest that old electronics are only continuing to pile up in landfills. Between the months of March through June 2020, 60% have disposed of one or more electronic items, with the top electronic items thrown away including charging cords (49%), headphones (42%) and mobile phones (29%). Of those disposing these items, the primary reasons for doing so are due to lack of knowledge about how to properly dispose, donate and/or resell them (44%) and not knowing if the items were recyclable or not (36%).

“Now is the time that we all need to step up and educate people on this issue. I’m a big believer that tackling the problem of e-waste needs to be the next big movement in green initiatives alongside other important environmental issues that have taken center stage in recent years,” comments Liam Howley, CMO of Decluttr, “The biggest thing that consumers can do to support this cause is to stop the cycle of buying new and opt for used or refurbished items, as well as trading in or recycling their old devices for reuse. The more that people can rely on what’s already in circulation as opposed to new items, the fewer electronics we’ll ultimately need to dispose of long-term.”

\*This survey was fielded on July 15, 2020 and included 1,332 U.S. Millennials (23-38) and Generation Z (18-22). Consumer sample provided by mobile panel provider, Pollfish.

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**About Decluttr**

Decluttr was brought to the US in 2014 by global re-commerce leader musicMagpie, the biggest third-party seller in the world on Amazon and the first company in the world to pass ten million in eBay feedback. Decluttr.com is a fast, easy and free way to sell tech and media such as smartphones, tablets, wearables, CDs, DVDs, games, books, LEGO® and more, as well as to purchase refurbished tech and media.

Decluttr offers customers a better value and more sustainable option when purchasing and trading-in their tech, that is ‘Smart for you and Smart for the planet’. It refurbishes 95% of the products it receives from its customers, and if it can’t refurbish them, the majority of their parts will be reused to refurbish other products. Its business practices promote a circular economy model and it is proud to support the reduction of e-waste globally, as well as the reduction of mining for precious metals used in new tech.

The service removes all of the stress of selling unwanted items online. All customers need to do is visit the site or download the app, enter the barcode of the item or scan it, get an instant price, pack into any box and ship them for free to Decluttr.

Thanks to Decluttr’s fast next day payments, customers get paid the day after their items arrive by direct deposit, PayPal or check – or they can even donate the money they make to charity. To date, the site has paid more than $300M to over 6 million customers - and the service is growing faster than ever.

[Decluttr.com](http://decluttr.com) has been featured on Good Morning America, ABC News, Fox News, The Penny Hoarder, Fast Company, The Wall Street Journal and much more.

For more information, visit [www.decluttr.com](http://www.decluttr.com).