

Electronic Waste Management in Sri Lanka.

Even though the use of electronic and electrical equipment facilitate in making community life easy, in view of the gradual increase of the waste generation as a result of the increase use of such equipment creates hazardous situation to the community life and environmental due to lack of proper management.



The addition of the heavy metals in the chemical content of in electronic and electrical equipment to the environment are the agents causing the diseases such as skin diseases, lung cancer, nervous diseases, kidney diseases, eye diseases, etc. Further it has been identified that the failure to maintain proper management of the accessories added to the environment along with the electronic waste could cause various

environmental problems to all living beings.

The developed Countries in the world have given their priority attention to this matter and have taken remedial action by formulation of policies and regulations for that purpose. One of the remedial measures introduced is the concept of the generator himself should hold the responsibility for electronic waste. According to the system, an electronic equipment removed after use is sent to the Generator who manages it in accordance with the appropriate methodologies.

The electronic waste generated in Sri Lanka include mostly to CFL bulbs, mobile phones, television sets, batteries, computers, etc. In view of the minimal awareness of the damaging reactions of those electronic waste among the public and the Institution, eagerness for the proper management, is very low. It is evident from the methods such as the disposal of those with other waste to the environmental, burning and burying adopted for of the disposal of electronic waste is lack of awareness.

Section 23 of (a) and (b) of the National Environmental Act No.47 of 1980 deals with this matter and the details thereon appear the Order 15 of the National Environmental (Protection and Quality) Order No.1 of 2008.

According to such Orders, no person shall generate, collect, transport, store, recover, recycle dispose waste or establish any site or facility for the disposal of any waste establish any site or facing for the disposal of any waste specified in the schedule exempt under the authority of a license issued by the

Authority and in accordance with such standard and other criteria as may be specified by the Authority.

Even though a large number of articles such as the computers, washing machines, electronic fans, air-conditioners, mobile phones, electric ovens, rice-cookers, photocopiers, cassette players, etc., discarded are under the category of electronic and electrical waste, it was observed that only the compact broken substandard florescent bulbs/lamp and discarded computers and accessories and discarded mobile phones only were included are the National Environmental Order.



There are 1,080 importers of mobile phones in Sri Lanka the number of mobile phones imported into Sri Lanka from the year 2012 to the year 2015 had been 16.2 million. The laws, rules of the Central Environmental Authority had been made applicable only in respect of the importation of used electronic equipment. No control whatsoever had been exercised in the importation of unused equipment. Nevertheless equipment of very low quality which become waste in a few months had been included in the unused equipment and that had directly contributed to the increase in the quantity of electronic waste in the country.

Twelve private institution which manage the electronic waste according to the appropriate methodologies were

functioning under the supervision of Central Environmental Authority. In addition, an institution with a huge capacity for the recycling of CFL bulbs had been established in Homagama area. It was observed that due to the minimal awareness of that institutions among the public as well as the Government Institutions, the decisions of electronic waste for proper management is not happening scientifically, These institutions are establish only in the Western Province and problem relating to waste management had emerged in the other Provinces.



Due to lack of recycling facilities in the country, it was observed that there is an increasing trend among the licensed collectors for collecting the waste from which valuable metal can be separated. In view of this reasons there is room for waste of lesser value but hazardous being irregularly released to the environment.

As the showroom is the pivotal point of contact of the customer in the purchase of electronic and electric equipment the display of notices showing the importance of the proper disposal of the waste and the methodology of disposal should be made compulsory thereby Co-opting the consumer direct to the Waste Management Process.