



Welcome to urban mining and e-recycling

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The worsening problem of garbage disposal worldwide is being met by an equally soaring high tech determination to stop it before the planet drowns in its own waste.

Scientific American reported over the weekend that new hope is emerging from the mounds of new age garbage and discards through a dramatic pair of new age solutions – urban mining and e-recycling.

In an article in Scientific American, Joey Peters and ClimateWire said urban mining is leading the charge in digging into landfills and garbage dumps to mine for the thrown away batteries and power supplies of old gadgets already disposed of as either no longer working or simply obsolete.

Peters noted that among the leaders in the urban mining industry is Electronic Recyclers International whose CEO said the emerging global industry deals essentially with anything that is recyclable, giving hope to the preservation of our planet by re-defining total waste as neither total nor waste.

CEO John Shegerian of Recyclers was quoted as saying that urban mining goes beyond recycling electronic parts of dumped gadgets, noting that many of the discarded gadgets contain valuable metals such as platinum and iridium which could be recovered. Much of these precious metals used in the US electronics industry are imported.

The article said the state of California alone already has 60 e-recyclers and more than 500 collectors specializing in recovering materials from dumped electronic devices.

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