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Battery Recycling brings Lead Poisoning in El Salvador



"IN THIS PLACE THERE ARE 33,000 TONS OF ASHES AND TOXIC SLAG. THEREFORE WE DEMAND (THE DECLARATION OF AN) ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCY.

The Communities of the Lead-Free Movement."

On our trip to Central America in February one of the more disturbing problems we encountered was a community in El Salvador that has been contaminated with lead. When the company that set up the plant was selling the concept to the community way back when, they baked up a batch of cookies and went door to door handing out cookies and telling the people they were setting up a plant to make cookies like these.

By the time the plant was up and running it was too late. At first blush the concept of setting up a battery recycling plant seems like a good idea but you have to remember that there are all kinds of heavy metals and toxins created in the process. Not handled correctly these would be a huge problem and of course handling the waste correctly would cut profits. It was unceremoniously dumped in a huge pile on the plant property.

It is from the huge pile that the heavy metals and toxins seeped into the soil and further into the ground water. To make matters worse, there was also lead and other poisons coming out of the plant smoke stack.

The community was inundated with lead and other toxins. It was in their drinking water, in the fruit and vegetables grown on the contaminated land. They were breathing it in with every breath.

Since lead poisoning attacks the nervous system, it wasn't long before they started to see problems with the kids at school; behavior issues, headaches, inability to concentrate and complaints of aching bones. Various types of symptoms started to show up in the adult community. People were losing their hair, there were problems with headaches, seizures and numerous other afflictions. Babies were stillborn. We were told that there hadn't been a successful birth in this community of 1,300 families for more than two years now.

Of course the people would love to leave and go somewhere else but this is their home and they have nothing else. Their property is worthless now. The former government that allowed this disaster to occur, is no longer in power and the new government is not accepting responsibility either. If they were to declare this an environmental disaster they would have to clean it up at a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars.



This is a huge problem and one beyond the scope of World Accord's resources to handle. But we can use our voices, help make people aware of problems like this and hopefully help prevent more things like this from happening around our planet.

From our research the best natural remedy for heavy metals poisoning is - believe it or not - Cilantro. Lots of it. We have translated the English documents on the topic and sent them to our partners in El Salvador. We have also contacted the [Health Ministries Association of the Community of Christ](#) to see if they might be able to run a medical mission to the area. If you know anyone what does medical missions, you could suggest this as a community they might want to help.

While it has been a slow and long fight, the Lead Free Movement appears to be making headway in at least having the source of contamination cleaned up.

If you read Spanish, check out [the Lead Free Movement blog](#).

I had read that the human race is stealing resources and capacity from future generations in the name of progress and profit. Only we can stop it folks.