Household Battery Recycling

Batteries power many items we use in our daily lives, and can pile up when they are no longer useful. This guide provides an overview of requirements and explains how to safely store and dispose of common types of household batteries.

Battery recycling requirements for households

Wisconsin has no legal requirements, with the exception of lead-acid batteries, for disposal of household-generated batteries. These include alkaline, lithium, lithium ion, metal hydride, nickel-cadmium, silver oxide and zinc-air. Batteries come in many sizes and can be rechargeable or single use. The Department of Natural Resources recommends recycling many battery types by taking them to a drop-off site. Batteries should never go in household recycling bins. For more information, review the chart on the back of this publication, or go to dnr.wi.gov and search "batteries."



Household battery recycling locations

Lead-acid batteries, or "automotive type batteries," are banned from disposal. Consumers may bring lead-acid batteries to any Wisconsin retailer that sells these batteries for recycling. This service is free to customers who buy a new battery. Customers may be charged a fee if they bring in a used battery without buying a new one.

For drop-off locations that accept **other battery types**, visit WisconsinRecyclingDirectory.com or Call2Recycle.org or contact your local recycling program. Some sites may charge a fee or accept only certain battery types.

Electronics with rechargable

batteries banned from Wisconsin landfills and incinerators

Cellphones Laptops **Tablets** Computer peripherals Other portable electronics with screens

Visit dnr.wi.gov, search "ecycle" for a full list of banned electronics and to find collection sites or mail-back programs.



Know the risk: how to prepare and store batteries for recycling

Many batteries, especially lithium ion, pose a fire risk due to their chemistries and ability to hold a charge. Batteries can spark and start a fire if their terminals touch metal or each other. The following recommendations can lower the risk of fire.

- Put each battery in an individual, clear plastic bag, or tape each battery's terminals with clear packing tape.
- Store batteries in a non-metal container.
- Store swollen or damaged batteries in sand or kitty litter.
- Keep battery labels visible.
- Take stored batteries to a drop-off location frequently.









Single-use alkaline batteries have little recycling value and may be safely thrown in the trash.

Household battery disposal options

The chart below categorizes household-generated battery disposal options by battery type. The battery types listed under "Recycling Encouraged" may be thrown in the trash if recycling is not a viable option. Follow the safety instructions on the front page to reduce the risk of fire in your trash.

To learn more about disposal options for non-households, see Battery Recycling for Businesses (WA-1622) by going to dnr.wi.gov and searching "batteries."

| Battery Type | Uses | Sizes | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--|
| RECYCLING REQUIRED | | | |
| Lead Acid vehicle batteries | Cars, trucks, motorcycles, boats and other vehicles | 12V, 6V | |
| Lithium ion batteries when contained in Wisconsin landfill-banned electronics | Laptops, cellphones, notebooks, tablets, computer peripherals, other portable electronics with screens | Sizes vary | |

RECYCLING ENCOURAGED

| Reusable Alkaline Manganese (rechargeable) | Flashlights, toys, clocks, portable electronics, smoke alarms, remote controls | AAA, AA, C, D |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Lithium/Lithium Ion (Li/Li-ion) | Power tools, power banks, toys, electronic cigarettes/vaping devices | 3V, 6V, 9V, Button, AAA, AA, C, D |
| Nickel-Cadmium (Ni-Cd) (rechargeable) | Flashlights, toys, cellphones, power tools, computer packs, R/C hobby vehicles | AAA, AA, C, D, 6V, 9V |
| Nickel-Metal Hydride (Ni-HM) (rechargeable) | Same as Nickel-Cadmium (above) | AAA, AA, C, D, 6V, 9V |
| Sealed Lead Acid (Pb) (rechargeable) | Video cameras, power tools, wheelchairs, ATV's, metal detectors, clocks, cameras | Multiples of 2 Volts: 2V, 6V, 12V |
| Button or coin: multiple types (mostly single use, many now contain lithium) | Watches, hearing aids, small portable electronics, computer motherboards, toys, greeting cards, remote controls | Sizes vary |

DISPOSABLE—NOT EASILY RECYCLED

| Alkaline (Manganese) | Flashlights, toys, clocks, portable electronics, smoke alarms, remote controls | AAA, AA, C, D, 6V, 9V |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Carbon Zinc | Low drain devices, such as calculators, toys, clocks, smoke alarms, remote controls, transistor radios, garage door openers | AAA, AA, C, D, 6V, 9V |
| Zinc-air | Hearing aids, medical devices | Button, 9V |
| Silver Oxide | Watches, hearing aids, toys, greeting cards, remote controls | Sizes vary |

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