

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, mercury oxide, nickel-cadmium, silver oxide and zinc-air batteries. Batteries come in many sizes and can be rechargeable or single use. While not required, the DNR recommends recycling many battery types. 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 rechargeable batteries banned from Wisconsin landfills and incinerators

Cellphones
Laptops
Tablets
Computer peripherals
Other portable electronics with screens

Visit dnr.wi.gov search "cycle" 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, electrical or duct 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 search “batteries.”

Battery Type	Uses	Sizes
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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, cellular phones, 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

DISPOSABLE-NOT EASILY RECYCLED

Button- multiple types	Watches, hearing aids, small portable electronics, computer motherboards, toys, greeting cards, remote controls	Sizes vary
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
Mercury Oxide (now banned in U.S.)	Watches, calculators, hearing aids	Sizes vary

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