

Franklin County Solid Waste Management District

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PRESS RELEASE

To: District Town Newsletters and websites
Contact: Amy Donovan, Program Director: 413-772-2438 or
info@franklincountywastedistrict.org
Date: December 28, 2016
Re: Article for town newsletters and websites

Battery Recycling and Proper Disposal

Free battery and cell phone recycling is available at all 17 transfer stations within Franklin County Solid Waste District. Place batteries in a plastic bag and hand batteries and cell phones to the transfer station attendant for separate processing; never place in recycling dumpsters!

There are many different types of batteries and some contain mercury and other heavy metals. Batteries can release mercury, cadmium or other heavy metals into the air and water, ultimately entering the food chain and posing health threats to people and the environment. Please read below for disposal instructions for specific battery types.

Rechargeable batteries are found in those electronics and appliances that can be recharged, such as cell phones; cordless phones; ipads/tablets; laptops; power tools; robotic vacuum cleaners, recumbent bikes, some toys; kids ride-on toys; baby monitors; some digital cameras; two-way radios, biomedical equipment, and rechargeable toothbrushes, razors, flashlights, and handheld vacuum cleaners. In addition, rechargeable batteries that can be recharged with a battery recharger should also be recycled when they can no longer hold a charge. Rechargeable batteries and cell phones contain heavy metals and should never be thrown away; they should always be recycled. Hand rechargeable batteries to your transfer station attendant. Cell phones should also be recycled in this manner.

The specific batteries accepted include: Nickel-cadmium (Ni-cad), Nickel Metal Hydride (Ni-MH), Nickel Zinc (Ni-Zn), Lithium Ion batteries (Li-ion), and Small Sealed Lead (Pb). These abbreviations are printed on rechargeable batteries.

"Call 2 Recycle" boxes for free rechargeable battery recycling are available at Lowe's. Rechargeable batteries can also be taken to Household Hazardous Waste Collections. Recycling for these batteries is always free.

Alkaline batteries are the most common household batteries. They are available in many sizes and shapes such as AA, C, D and 9 volt. Alkaline batteries manufactured since 1996 do not contain mercury or other hazardous materials. Alkaline batteries are safe to throw in the trash, but tape the contacts on 9-volts before storage or disposal. **All batteries should be checked carefully before disposal, as some rechargeable and lithium batteries resemble alkalines.**

If you would like to reduce the number of alkaline batteries you are using, consider purchasing an inexpensive battery charger and some compatible rechargeable batteries. These batteries can be recharged over and over again, but remember to recycle them (as above) when they cannot be charged anymore.

Carbon Zinc and Zinc Chloride batteries may be disposed of in the same manner as alkaline batteries; see above.

Lithium batteries are used many applications but most often in cameras. The word "lithium" is printed on the battery. Be sure to check all batteries; some lithium batteries, such as the AA size or the short and fat lithium batteries used in cameras, resemble alkaline batteries, but should be recycled by handing them to your transfer station attendant. Lithium batteries can also be taken to Household Hazardous Waste Collections.

Button batteries are the small round silver batteries found in watches, calculators, hearing aids, toys, remote car locks, flameless "flicker candles," electric fence dog collars, singing greeting cards and singing balloons. Some button batteries contain mercury; therefore, button batteries must be disposed of properly: hand to your transfer station attendant. Button batteries can also be taken to Household Hazardous Waste Collections.

Lead Acid batteries from cars, trucks, kids ride-on toys, etc. must be recycled by law. Recycling programs, some for cash or credit back, are available at auto supply stores, local scrap metal recyclers, and at some transfer stations. Lead acid batteries are also accepted at household hazardous waste collections.

For more information please contact the Franklin County Solid Waste District at 413-772-2438, email info@franklincountywastedistrict.org, or visit www.franklincountywastedistrict.org. *MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370 (TTY/TDD).*