

# 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](http://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](http://WisconsinRecyclingDirectory.com) or [Call2Recycle.org](http://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](http://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](http://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

#### Equal Opportunity Employer and Americans with Disabilities Act Statement:

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services, and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Chief, Public Civil Rights, Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

This publication is available in alternative format (large print, Braille, etc.) upon request. Please call 608-266-2111 for more information. Note: If you need technical assistance or more information, call the Accessibility Coordinator at 608-267-7490 / TTY Access via relay - 711.



PUB-WA-1621 2022






**Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources**  
Bureau of Waste and Materials Management  
P.O. Box 7921 | Madison, WI 53707-7921  
[DNRWle-cycling@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRWle-cycling@wisconsin.gov)



# What to Know About Wisconsin's Electronics Recycling Rule

Wisconsin's new electronics recycling rule specifies requirements for collecting, storing, transporting and processing electronics. Most Wisconsin facilities that dismantle or further process electronics will need a solid waste processing approval and license from the Department of Natural Resources. **The new rule affects all electronics collection sites and recyclers, not just those registered with E-Cycle Wisconsin.**

Additional changes for **E-Cycle Wisconsin participants** include:

-  **More devices will be eligible** to count toward manufacturer recycling targets. This means collectors and recyclers may need to change how they sort electronics.
-  **Manufacturers of video game system consoles** or other components that meet the definition of a computer will need to register these devices.
-  **Collectors** will need to independently track loads they send to other collectors or recyclers.
-  **Recyclers** will need to use bills of lading for transporting eligible electronics and components to and from their facilities.
-  **Out-of-state recyclers** may need to update their owner financial responsibility (OFR).

## Key new requirements for all electronics collection sites

### All Wisconsin collection sites

- ✓ Containers or packaging for electronics must be:
  - Adequate to prevent breakage and spills
  - Compatible with the contents
  - Made of material that will remain structurally sound for the length of time electronics are stored
- ✓ Store electronics in a way that will prevent damage from weather, theft or vandalism
- ✓ Ship electronics to a recycler at least once a year
- ✓ Limit public access to when an attendant is on duty for areas where mechanical equipment is part of your operation
- ✓ Clearly label the recycling area at your site
- ✓ Keep area clean and free of litter
- ✓ Don't burn electronics or other solid waste
- ✓ Provide means to control fires
- ✓ Maintain all-weather access road/parking

### Additional requirements for E-Cycle Wisconsin collectors

- ✓ Notify the DNR of changes to sites, events, materials accepted, etc.
- ✓ Maintain independent records of loads of eligible electronic devices you send to another registered collector or recycler

## Key new requirements for all electronics recyclers

### All Wisconsin electronics processing facilities

- ✓ Obtain a solid waste processing approval and license unless you meet one of the limited exemptions
  - Submit initial site inspection form
  - Submit plan of operation
  - Annual license renewal (no fee)
  - Estimate your closure costs and set aside money for owner financial responsibility
- ✓ Notify haulers you contract with of handling requirements for e-waste

### Additional requirements for E-Cycle Wisconsin recyclers

- ✓ Use a bill of lading for transporting eligible electronics to and from your facility
- ✓ Provide proof of financial responsibility for all facilities where eligible electronics are stored or recycled
- ✓ In-state recyclers must use DNR forms for OFR
- ✓ Out-of-state recyclers must meet equivalent OFR requirements

## New E-Cycle Wisconsin eligible electronics

Cellphones and other phones with a video display

Battery-powered phone accessories (headsets, speakers, selfie sticks, etc.)

Video game consoles

Battery-powered video game accessories (controllers, headsets, etc.)



The rule is expected to take effect **July 1, 2023**.

If you have questions about how this affects you, contact DNR e-cycle staff at 608-234-0533 or [DNRWle-cycling@wisconsin.gov](mailto:DNRWle-cycling@wisconsin.gov).

