

# Household Batteries:

## Recycling and disposal

Once a battery is used up or no longer useful, the battery's chemistry will determine how best to dispose of it.

Look on the battery's label or packaging to identify the battery type, then follow this guide for safe disposal.

Many stores that sell electronics or batteries will accept used batteries. Be sure to contact them first.

651.633.EASY (3279)

## Recycling and Disposing of Batteries

Batteries are accepted at all Ramsey County Household Hazardous Waste sites. For more information, visit [www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ph](http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ph) (click on Hazardous Waste), or call the Recycling & Solid Waste Hotline at 651.633.EASY (3279).



**Rechargeable batteries: Recycle at a retailer or Ramsey County Household Hazardous Waste site**  
For a list of participating retailers, contact the RBRC at 1.800.8.BATTERY, or [www.rbrc.org](http://www.rbrc.org).



Nickel cadmium (Ni-Cd)



Lithium ion (Li-ion)



Nickel metal hydride (Ni-MH)



Small sealed lead acid (Pb)



**Single-use batteries: Recycle at a retailer or Ramsey County Household Hazardous Waste site**



Button



Lithium

Lithium batteries may be reactive. Place each battery in a separate plastic bag or apply non-conductive (electrical) tape over the battery terminals. Place tape on both sides of each button battery.



**Vehicle batteries: Recycle at a retailer or Ramsey County Household Hazardous Waste site**

By law, auto battery retailers must accept up to 5 lead-acid batteries from consumers free of charge.



Lead acid



**Single-use batteries: Okay to place in trash**



Alkaline



Carbon zinc

Carbon zinc and alkaline batteries may be placed in the trash, EXCEPT any alkaline batteries purchased before 1994 (contains mercury).

## Use Rechargeable Batteries

Rechargeable batteries can be recharged up to 1,000 times and are recyclable. Like compact fluorescent light bulbs, rechargeable batteries cost more but will save you money in the long run.

### What's the Problem

Each year, over two billion household batteries are purchased in the United States to power a variety of products. Some household batteries contain toxic metals like mercury, lead, cadmium and silver, which may contaminate our air and water, if the batteries are incinerated or disposed of in a landfill. Over time, these metals can accumulate in living tissue and cause adverse health effects.

### Battery handling tips

Store batteries in a vented plastic bucket or sturdy cardboard box. **DO NOT** place them in a container with an airtight lid. Gases that vent from batteries can be trapped, creating a potentially dangerous situation.

Wash your hands with soap and water after handling batteries, or use gloves.

If storing batteries together, place non-conducting (electrical) tape over terminals or place individual batteries in plastic bags to prevent short-circuiting.

**DO NOT** attempt to discharge a battery by short-circuiting the terminals.

Older batteries may rust and leak after long periods of storage. If a battery appears to be dirty or has a white, film-like substance around the terminals, **DO NOT** touch the dirty area. Carefully place it in a bag for recycling or disposal.



### Ramsey County Year-Round Household Hazardous Waste Collection Site

Bay West, Inc.  
5 Empire Drive  
St. Paul, MN  
651.633.EASY (3279)

**Information source:** Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
[www.pca.state.mn.us](http://www.pca.state.mn.us)



Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

**For more information on disposal of household items** visit the Ramsey County online A to Z Disposal Guide at [www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ph](http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/ph) or call 651-633-EASY (3279).



Ramsey County

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