



**HOUSEHOLD BATTERIES
REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE
WHAT YOU CAN DO**



Americans purchase more than three billion dry-cell batteries each year. While handy, household batteries can contain heavy metals, such as cadmium, lead, lithium, mercury, nickel, silver and zinc. If improperly disposed of or buried in landfills, these could harm the environment by leaching into surface water or groundwater. According to a 1994 Nebraska Cooperative Extension report, "...dry cell batteries contribute about 88 percent of the total mercury and 50 percent of the cadmium in the municipal solid waste stream." Long-term exposure to heavy metals can lead to serious health problems. Cadmium can cause lung, circulatory system, or reproductive system damage. Mercury can damage the brain, kidneys, or fetuses, as well as cause genetic, neurological, or psychological disorders. Cadmium, lead, manganese, mercury, nickel, and zinc have each been linked to cancer, developmental disorders, and immune deficiency. Check the following items in your home to reduce, reuse, or recycle your battery waste: calculators, cameras/video recorders, cassette players/recorders, cellular and cordless phones, clocks, computers, digital cameras, electric toothbrushes, emergency backup lighting/flashlights/lanterns, handheld vacuums, hearing aids, laptop computers, pagers, personal digital assistants, power tools, radios, remote controls, smoke detectors, toys, and watches.



If you are unsure of the battery type, check the label. The Mercury-Containing and Rechargeable Battery Management Act of 1996 requires that rechargeable batteries containing cadmium, lead, and mercury be labeled for recycling. Additionally, this law phased out the use of mercury in batteries. The exception is button batteries which can still contain up to 25mg of mercury. These are also made with silver or lithium, and need to be recycled. Currently, alkaline batteries, such as those used in flashlights, remote controls, and other everyday appliances, are not recyclable locally. However, because alkaline and carbon zinc batteries manufactured after 1992 do not contain mercury, they are no longer considered hazardous, so it is safe to dispose of them in the trash.

You can **REDUCE** the amount of hazardous waste you generate by:

- Reading labels and choosing cadmium- or mercury-free batteries.
- Checking to see if you have enough batteries before buying more.
- Use solar products where possible.
- When suitable, choose hand-operated over battery-operated items.
- Plug into AC/DC when you can.



REUSE your batteries. Nearly one in five dry-cell batteries purchased in the United States is rechargeable. Over its useful life, each rechargeable battery may substitute for hundreds of single-use batteries. All rechargeable batteries are recyclable, including nickel-cadmium (Ni-CD), nickel metal hydride, lithium ion, and small-sealed lead (Pb) batteries.

RECYCLING keeps heavy metals out of landfills and conserves natural resources; recovered plastics and metals can be used to make new batteries. Button batteries might be taken back by electronics retailers, hearing aid stores, hospitals, jewelers, or pharmacies for recycling, while hardware stores may collect alkaline or carbon batteries.

Other options for recycling, while supporting local businesses:

Air Link Communications, 3533 Hampton Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63139

Phone: (314) 353-2728, Fax: (314) 353-4923, Web Link: <http://www.airlinkdirect.com>

Days/Hours: Monday-Friday 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.; Saturday 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.; Sunday 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Batteries Recycled: nickel-metal hydride (Ni-MH).

P.M. Electric Company, 5280 Fyler Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63139

Phone: (314) 351-4550, Fax: (314) 353-5860

Days/Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Batteries Recycled: power tool and lawn equipment.



RadioShack

Web Link: <http://www.radioshack.com>

Batteries Recycled: nickel-cadmium (Ni-Cd).

- 4135 Lindell Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri 63108; Phone: (314) 534-2910
Days/Hours: Monday-Saturday 10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.; Sunday 12:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.
- 4220 South Broadway, St. Louis, Missouri 63111; Phone: (314) 353-6897
Days/Hours: Monday-Friday 10:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.; Saturday 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.; Sunday 11:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
- 3811 Gravois Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63116; Phone: (314) 776-2830
Days/Hours: Monday-Saturday 9:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m.; Sunday 11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
- 3517 Hampton Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63139; Phone: (314) 351-0203
Days/Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.; Saturday 9:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.; Sunday 11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.



St. Louis Electronics, 4014 Chouteau Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63110

Phone: (314) 535-3737, Fax: (314) 535-7850

Days/Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Batteries Recycled: lead acid, lithium ion (Li-ion), nickel-cadmium (Ni-Cd), and nickel-metal hydride (Ni-MH).

St. Louis Shaver & Appliance, 1102 Locust Street, St. Louis, Missouri 63101

Phone: (314) 436-0625, Fax: (314) 436-0625, Web Link: <http://www.mrshaver.com>

Days/Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Batteries Recycled: shaver, power tool, and phone.

Additionally:

- Recycle phone batteries at retail stores, such as **Cingular**, **Sprint**, and **Verizon Wireless**.
- The **Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation** partners with many national retailers such as **Lowe's**, **Home Depot**, **Sears**, and **Target** in efforts to collect these batteries. Check for the logo and go to <http://www.rbrc.org> to find a location near you.

