

Battery Recycling

Take a quick look around your home and you'd be surprised to see that you use batteries in most common household items.

Primary (single-use) batteries are typically found in toys, watches/clocks, smoke alarms, audiovisual equipment and remote controls. Secondary (rechargeable) batteries are most commonly found in cordless drills, mobile phones, laptops and PCs, shavers and cameras.

Australians use thousands of tonnes of batteries every year, most of which end up in landfill where the metals can leak and contaminate soil and groundwater.

How to reduce your battery waste

Try to minimize battery usage by connecting appliances to the mains power where possible. Buying rechargeable batteries is an important way to reduce battery waste. Each battery can be recharged up to 1000 times, saving you money and reducing pollution from discarded batteries.

There are many battery rechargers available. Planet Ark endorses Varta's Charge 'n' Go, which conveniently takes less than 15 minutes to recharge.

Why recycle batteries?

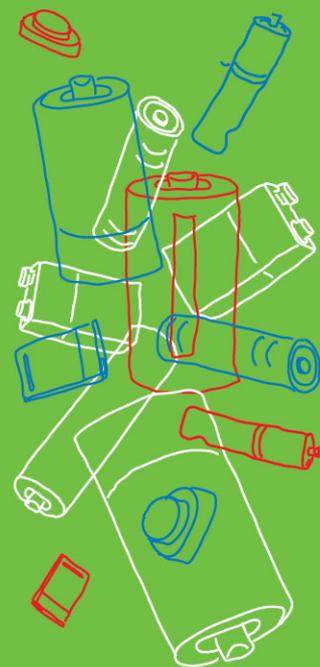
Household batteries contain toxic metals such as cadmium, mercury and lead, which can be harmful to the environment when disposed of to landfill. Used rechargeable batteries are classified as a hazardous waste under the *Hazardous Waste Act 1989*. This means that they should not be disposed of with general household waste.



NATIONAL
RECYCLING WEEK

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Factsheet



How do you recycle computers, corks, cartridges and cans?

For information on council services and drop-off locations in your area... visit



RecyclingNearYou
.com.au

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or call



RECYCLING HOTLINE
1300 733 712

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Battery collections

Most councils offer regular collections and/or provide drop-off locations for hazardous waste.

The only national collection program for batteries is run by Cleanaway. They collect primary and secondary batteries in flat-packed boxes that can be sent back for recycling.

There are a number of other local programs for recycling batteries. Search RecyclingNearYou.com.au to find collection points in your local area.

Drop off the battery when it is completely discharged – if you are not sure, cover the poles of the battery with a piece of sticky tape. For lead-acid or car batteries, see Car Battery (Lead-Acid Battery) Factsheet.

What happens to the batteries?

After batteries are collected, they are sorted into their types and components and sent to licensed recycling facilities in Australia or overseas for processing.

Recycling battery components is a complex and expensive process due to the chemistry involved. AusZinc, in Wollongong, have recently built facilities to recycle primary (alkaline) batteries. These batteries can be processed to recover zinc, manganese and ferrous metals.

Secondary batteries are commonly Nickel Cadmium, Nickel Metal Hydride or Lithium Ion. Plastics and metals, such as ferro-nickel, can be recovered and recycled. Cadmium, for example, is used to manufacture new batteries.

More information

Sustainability Victoria (sustainability.vic.gov.au)
Cleanaway (cleanaway.com.au)
SITA Environmental Solutions (sita.com.au)
Battery World (batteryworld.com.au)
AusZinc (auszinc.com.au)

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**Planet Ark
Environmental
Foundation**

Level 2/15-17 Young Street
Sydney NSW 2000
T 02 8484 7200
RecyclingWeek.PlanetArk.org