

Campus Battery Recycling Guidelines

Every year, Towson University uses hundreds of pounds of batteries that are thrown away when no longer needed and ultimately end up in local landfills. In addition to plastic and steel, the majority of these batteries contain corrosives, heavy metals, or other hazardous constituents that pose a risk to our environment. All of these elements can be recovered and used in the re-manufacturing of new batteries and other consumer products. Nationally, the EPA estimates that batteries make up 10% to 25% of our domestic hazardous waste stream.

To protect our environment, used batteries are collected for recycling by the Department of Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) at TU. Some of the batteries that can be recycled are as follows:

- Single Use Non-Rechargeable Alkaline or Carbon Zinc Dry Cell (6V, 9V, C, D, AA, AAA, etc.)
- Lithium/Lithium Ion
- Mercury/Mercuric Oxide
- Silver Oxide, Zinc Air Button
- Sealed Lead Acid/Lead Gel
- Button batteries
- Nickel Cadmium (Ni-Cd, Ni-Cad)
- Nickel Metal Hydride (Ni-MH)

If your battery is not listed, please contact EHS at (410) 704-5500 or recycling@towson.edu for guidance. This recycling program is intended only for batteries used on campus. Individuals should continue to use household hazardous waste days and manufacturers' purchase/exchange programs for disposal of batteries generated at home or other off-campus locations. Please do not leave batteries outside pending recycling.

To guard against possible short-circuiting, the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation (established by battery manufacturers) recommends doing at least one of the following to prepare rechargeable batteries for recycling:

1. Discharge Cells - This should be done only by a knowledgeable engineer or technician.
2. Terminal Protection - If you cannot assure that the cells have been completely discharged, cover the terminals of each battery with non-conductive tape.
3. Place in a Plastic Bag - Batteries may be placed separately in plastic bags so the terminals will not come in contact with other batteries or metal during storage or transport.
4. Package batteries so that terminals will not short-circuit during storage or transport.

Single-use, non-rechargeable batteries do not need their terminals taped. Place leaking batteries into a resealable bag to contain chemical contamination.

Wet cell batteries such as lead-acid motor vehicle batteries are not included in this program but can be recycled. A collection pallet with secondary containment is located in the General Services Truck Well adjacent to the Material Management roll-up door for this purpose. Cracked or leaking wet cell batteries, however, cannot be recycled and must be

disposed of as hazardous waste. Contact EHS at (410) 704-5500 or recycling@towson.edu for guidance on the disposal of wet cell batteries. Please do not leave batteries outside pending recycling.

EHS provides three options for the free recycling of small used batteries (< 2 lb) generated on campus:

1. Drop off used batteries in a battery recycling bucket located near you.

Contact your department about the nearest battery recycling bucket locations near you. If your department routinely generates large quantities of waste batteries (~1 lb/year), contact EHS about obtaining your own recycling bucket.



2. Contact EHS.

If there is not a battery recycling bucket near you or your batteries are too big to fit in the bucket, place your waste batteries in a sturdy, leakproof container, and contact EHS to arrange for disposal. Also, contact EHS if your department does not currently have a battery recycling location in your building and would like to have one. You may contact EHS at (410) 704-5500 or recycling@towson.edu.