

Battery Disposal Procedures

The information listed below is intended to assist the West Chester University community in determining the proper method of disposal for batteries purchased with University funds and used for official business related activities.

Who to Contact:

The Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) will collect used batteries to be recycled. This recycling effort is intended to reduce the amount of used batteries disposed of improperly.

To request a pickup of used batteries you may contact EHS by phone or email.

- Phone: 610-436-3333
- Email: EHS@wcupa.edu

How Should Batteries Be Collected and Stored?

Used Batteries should be kept in a leak proof container or bag. If large quantities of batteries are being generated for disposal, a secondary container may be used to consolidate the individually packaged batteries into one accumulation area. Batteries accumulated in secondary containers must meet the following criteria:

- Closed when not adding batteries to the container
- Stored in a dry location and not exposed to the weather
- Batteries should not be taped together prior to placing in the container
- Different types of batteries should be placed in different collection containers
- Accumulation date shall not exceed 1 year from the start

Never place a broken, leaking, or damaged battery in the standard battery collection container – all broken and damaged batteries should be collected in a separate container. If possible, contain the battery leak, be sure to put on a pair of protective gloves and immediately place the battery into a sealable container or sturdy plastic bag. Contact EHS immediately for pickup.

Labeling Battery Containers – once a container is being used to collect batteries, proper labeling is required to be placed on the container. All containers collecting batteries must contain the following information:

- “Universal Waste – Batteries”
- Type of batteries stored in the container
- Accumulation start date (date the first battery was placed in the container)
- Department name
- Building name or storage location

Note – EHS will not pickup or accept batteries that are not properly packaged or labeled. It is the responsibility of the group generating the batteries to verify that the containers are in proper condition for transportation. *Contact EHS for proper containers and labels if needed.*

How to Identify What Type of Battery You Have:

Alkaline (carbon-Zinc): These are common non-rechargeable batteries that most people use. . These batteries are not regulated hazardous waste, but EHS manages them as such.

Button Cell Batteries: Button batteries are considered hazardous because they often contain mercury, silver or lithium. These batteries are often found in watches, calculators, hearing aids and other small electronic devices.

Equipment Containing a Non-Removal Rechargeable or Non-Rechargeable Battery: Any piece of equipment must be handled as hazardous if it contains a battery that is not capable of being removed.

Lead-Acid Batteries: These include automotive and smaller gel-cell batteries commonly use in emergency lighting systems. Lead-Acid batteries contain regulated amounts of lead and must be recycled.

Lithium Batteries: These batteries come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and are commonly used in computer clocks, cameras, watches, and other equipment. These batteries are not regulated hazardous waste, but EHS manages them as such.

Mercury Batteries: These are usually small and button shaped. Mercury batteries contain regulated amounts of mercury and should be handled as hazardous waste. These batteries are no longer available in the United States although they may still be found in older equipment.

Nickel-Cadmium: These are the most common rechargeable batteries and are commonly found in cellular phones, and other types of rechargeable equipment. NiCd batteries contain regulated amounts of cadmium and should be handled as hazardous wastes.

Miscellaneous: There are many different types of batteries that you may encounter and the majority of them are considered hazardous due to their chemical make up. Please handle any battery that you are unable to identify if or are unsure of its chemical composition as hazardous.

Examples include but not limited to:

- Zinc Air (used in hearing aids and older cameras)
- Nickel Iron (used in backup systems)
- Nickel Metal Hydride (rechargeable battery used in electronics)
- Mercury or Mercuric oxide (small electronic devices such as pacemakers and hearing aids)
- Silver Oxide (electronics)
- Magnesium