

Batteries of All Types

December, 2007

The Guthrie County Transfer Station has a program to recycle many types of worn out batteries. This ranges from **tiny hearing aid** to **large truck** batteries. Such recycling is a bit confusing so please read carefully as to what to recycle and how to recycle. This is another **FREE** service at the Transfer Station.

First, certain batteries are NOT considered any environmental risk and can be put into the regular gar-bage. Any battery that says "**alkaline**" on it is NOT a hazard and may be put into the trash. This includes most of the AAA, AA, A, C, and D batteries that you use around the house. Some camera batteries of odd size like N also may fall into this category. Alkaline batteries have no hazardous chemicals.

BUT these same size batteries that are RECHARGEABLE **do** contain hazardous materials (usually nickel-cadmium) and SHOULD be recycled. This will include many other rechargeable batteries such as cell phone and hand tool batteries. The normal rule would be that if it's rechargeable then it's recyclable.

Also, virtually all the little flat metal camera batteries, hearing aid batteries, etc. have lithium in them and are not legally allowed to be put into the trash. (We know.....it is much easier to do that!!!) But we do have mechanisms to properly dispose of such batteries.

First, if you have curbside recycling, you can put such batteries in an envelope or small box and clearly mark it "**BATTERIES TO RECYCLE**". Your curbside collector should pick them up and give them to the gate attendant at the Transfer Station when they deliver the other recyclables. Or, you can deliver them to the Transfer Station when you are taking out materials. It wouldn't be an inconvenience to keep a jar at home to put these into and deliver periodically when you are at the Transfer Station.

Also, in the west entrance alcove to the Guthrie County Courthouse there is a plastic barrel that's marked for battery recycling. Just drop the appropriate batteries in the slot. If you have some larger ones from tools, etc. that won't fit through the slot set them beside the barrel or bring them to the Environmental Health Dept. office on the main level of the Courthouse (by the east entrance door).

Larger LEAD-ACID batteries from motorcycles, cars, trucks, tractors, etc. are also recyclable. I just read an article that stated that over 95% of such batteries in the United States are recycled. (That's a big boost to reuse of lead and plastic!!) These batteries must be brought to the Transfer Station and NOT put out for the curbside collection. Also, when you buy a new battery at the hardware, auto parts, farm supply store, etc. always remember you can take an old battery with you as they will always accept one in exchange for the new one you purchase.

At the Transfer Station we periodically send the small type batteries to a recycling facility at a cost to the recycling program. The lead-acid batteries are sold for a small price to recycling companies. If you have any questions about specific batteries, contact one of the numbers listed for our Agency.