

## Battery Recycling 101 (revised January 2013)

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that Americans purchase and use nearly 3 billion dry cell batteries every year to power radios, toys, cellular phones, watches, laptop computers and portable power towels. The improper disposal of batteries can contaminate the environment. Federal legislation requires that batteries containing heavy metals such as mercury, lead, cadmium and nickel which can be released into the environment if incinerated or placed in a landfill must be recycled. Other batteries, categorized as “rechargeable”, are also required under federal legislation to be recycled. The majority of newer batteries are labeled with the battery type (typically stated on the side).

Temple University is committed to reducing its impact on the environment and adheres to all federal requirements for recycling of batteries. The batteries recycled by Temple University are:

- Batteries which contain heavy metals
- Batteries marked “rechargeable”

Alkaline batteries are not required by federal legislation to be recycled, even though some states have legislated recycling for alkaline batteries. Currently, Pennsylvania does not have legislation requiring recycling of alkaline batteries and Temple University does not recycle alkaline batteries. Yearly, Temple University purchases thousands of alkaline batteries which are not regulated and end up in landfills. In order to curb Temple University’s contribution to landfills, an alternative would be for users of single use alkaline batteries to consider buying rechargeable batteries through our vendors.

The Environmental Health and Radiation Safety (EHRS) Office is responsible for the safe recycling of these regulated batteries, **which have been bought using University funds and which have been used for official University business.** Listed below are some examples of the kinds of batteries that EHRS recycles:

Battery Type	Examples of Use	Disposal Procedure
Small Sealed Lead Acid (Pb) <i>weighing less than 2 lbs</i>	Video Cameras, Cell phones, power tools, wheelchairs, clocks, cameras	Collection center or EHRS
Lithium-Ion	Cameras, calculators, computer memory back-up	Collection Center or EHRS
Mercury or button	Hearing Aids, pacemakers, cameras, calculators, watches	EHRS
Nickel Cadmium (NiCad)	Flashlights, Cell phones, power tools computer packs	Collection Center or EHRS
Nickel Metal Hydride (Ni-MH)	Flashlights, Cell phones, power tools computer packs	Collection Center or EHRS

There are currently two ways for you to recycle your batteries at Temple University. The first is through the use of an online pickup request form. Complete the online [Chemical Waste Pickup Form](#) and an EHRS rep will come and pick up the battery. In addition, EHRS has designated two locations where you can drop off your batteries for recycling during normal business hours. The locations of the collection centers are listed below:

### Main Campus

Office of Sustainability  
Mitten Hall-Lower Level  
1913 North Broad Street

### Health Sciences Campus

Environmental Health & Radiation Safety  
Pharmacy Building-Basement-Room B49  
3330 N. Broad Street

Contact EHRS at 215-707-2520 or <http://www.temple.edu/ehrs> for assistance in determining your battery type or how to safely dispose a battery not mentioned above. The [Computer Recycling Center](#) will properly divert Temple University batteries that are surplus along with electronics.

Individuals with batteries used for personal reasons are encouraged to use curbside recycling, household hazardous waste programs or recycling drop off programs for the proper disposal. [Call2Recycle](#) has additional information as well as a search engine to assist you in finding a free drop off location. [Earth 911](#) is another useful website for information about recycling batteries, even single use alkaline batteries for free. Consult with your local municipality on alternatives to landfill disposal of alkaline batteries.