

## The Truth about Batteries



Throwing a little battery into the trash...harmless, right? **Wrong!**

Did you know that many types of batteries contain toxic waste and cannot simply be thrown away? When certain types of batteries are thrown away in landfills, they can release chemicals into groundwater and into the air. The metals and chemicals in batteries can deposit lead and mercury into lakes and streams and make the water toxic. Burning batteries can cause air pollution; and overheated batteries, such as laptop and cell phone

batteries, and even batteries found in greeting cards, thrown into a landfill, can cause fires.

Studies have shown that improperly handled batteries can also cause cancer, liver and kidney damage, asthma, nausea, headaches, and skin irritation in humans. So it is important to know how to properly dispose of different types of batteries.

Generally, if it's rechargeable or "button," you need to drop it off at a drop-off center. The following table gives a general idea as to how different types of batteries should be handled:

Battery Type	Description	Trash	Recycle
Zinc Carbon	Labeled "all-purpose" or "general purpose"	✓	
Zinc Chloride	Labeled "heavy duty" or "super heavy duty"	✓	
Alkaline (sold after 5/13/1996)	Last longer than Zinc Carbon or Zinc Chloride	✓	
Alkaline (sold before 5/13/1996)	Have added mercury		✓
Lithium	Some cell phones and notebook computers		✓
Button Cell	Hearing aids, medical devices, watches, calculators, cameras		✓
Nickel Cadmium	Rechargeable appliances or freestanding units		✓
Nickel Zinc	Computers, cell phones, camcorders		✓
Small Sealed Lead	Camcorders and some cell phones		✓

It is also important to keep batteries away from flammable materials, and all types of batteries should be stored in an area that is cool and dry.

Put batteries in plastic bags before recycling or disposal to keep them separated from each other (many drop-off locations will do this for you). You can drop off small batteries (under 11 lbs) at the Town Hall and at several area retailers. [The Londonderry Drop-off Center](#) located at 13 Recovery Way also accepts certain types of batteries.

For more information on how to handle and where to dispose of batteries, please contact the Town of Londonderry's Environmental Engineer at 432-1100 X137 or the NH Dept. of Environmental Services Household Hazardous Waste Coordinator at (603) 271-2047.

***Please recycle your batteries!***

***Information Provided By: Anna Haas and Katie LaCerde  
Community Battery Disposal Awareness Project for Girl Scout Bronze Award Program  
Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains, serving New Hampshire and Vermont***