

# HANDHELD BATTERY RECYCLING

## Guidelines for households

### Why should I recycle?

Batteries are a risk to human health and the environment if disposed of inappropriately. They also contain valuable metals such as cadmium, zinc, manganese, cobalt and rare earth metals that may be recovered to reduce the use of finite natural resources.

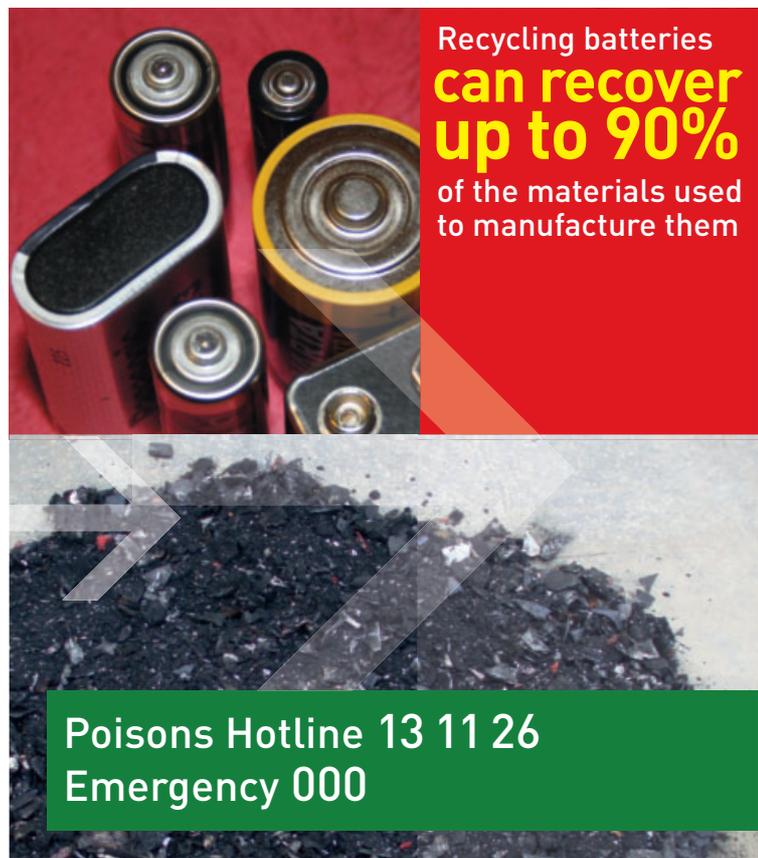
### What can I recycle?

There are many types of batteries used in every household and they all have different chemistries. Single-use batteries (non-rechargeable) can be either alkaline, zinc-carbon or lithium. These are used in products such as clocks, toys, cameras and remote controls. Rechargeable batteries are generally either lithium ion, nickel metal hydride or nickel cadmium. These are found in such products as mobile phones, laptops and power tools.

Rechargeable **lead acid batteries**, typically used for cars and motorbikes or as backup power for computers, need to be separated from other batteries for recycling and taken to a drop-off facility that takes car batteries. Heavy batteries (> 500g) also need to be separated for recycling.

### How can I recycle safely?

Used batteries are potentially hazardous, so they need to be stored and handled carefully. They need to be kept out of reach of children. Button cells (small round batteries) can be swallowed, causing choking or chemical burns. Some of the materials inside batteries are toxic, so you need to be careful of damaged or leaking batteries. Batteries must be kept away from sunlight or heat. **See over the page for more advice on safe handling of batteries for recycling.**



Recycling batteries  
**can recover up to 90%**  
of the materials used  
to manufacture them

**Poisons Hotline 13 11 26**  
**Emergency 000**

### Where can I take my batteries for recycling?

Planet Ark's 'Recycling near you' website provides information on recycling and waste services provided by your council, as well as local drop-off options for batteries, mobile phones and other electrical and electronic products. **Visit their website at [www.recyclingnearyou.com.au](http://www.recyclingnearyou.com.au) or call the recycling hotline on 1300 733 712.**



## How to recycle safely

### DO

- Use a cardboard or plastic container to collect batteries (batteries are heavy so the container needs to be strong).
- Keep the collection container away from children (this removes the risk of swallowing and contact with chemicals).
- Label the box or bag properly so every member of your household knows what the content is, e.g. "BATTERIES FOR RECYCLING".
- Store your batteries in a cool, dry place.
- Protect against short circuit by taping over the terminals of any lithium based batteries (including button cells) and any batteries that have both terminals on one side (e.g. 9V). If a battery has lead wires these should be removed or the bare wire ends covered in sticky tape.
- Place leaking or damaged batteries in a clear plastic bag and take them to a waste management centre or hazardous household waste collection point for disposal.
- Drop off your collected batteries regularly (store for a maximum of 6 months).
- Remove batteries from obsolete or broken electronic products and recycle them.
- Wash your hands with soap after handling batteries.

### DON'T

- Don't use an airtight container (to avoid a possible build-up of pressure).
- Don't use a metal container (to avoid the risk of short circuits).
- Don't mix household batteries with lead acid batteries, e.g. from cars or motorbikes.
- Don't damage or hide the label (the recycler will need to identify the battery).
- Don't store batteries near chemicals, food or produce.
- Don't store batteries outside or in a humid place (they need to remain dry).
- Don't store a large number of batteries (e.g. no more than a one-litre container at any time).
- Don't store batteries near a heat source (e.g. in the sun or close to the oven).
- Don't touch leaking or damaged batteries (use gloves) and clean up any spilled material carefully.
- Don't recycle leaking or damaged batteries.
- Don't move the collection container unnecessarily.

## Australian Battery Recycling Initiative

The Australian Battery Recycling Initiative is a not-for-profit association established in 2008 to promote responsible environmental management of batteries at end of life. More information on battery recycling can be found on their website at [www.batteryrecycling.org.au](http://www.batteryrecycling.org.au).