Battery Recycling Program

Batteries have traditionally contained large amounts of mercury and other heavy metals, which pose numerous threats to the environment. If landfilled, these metals could leach into ground water reserves and possibly contaminate surface waters and their living inhabitants.

Since 1984, an ongoing effort has been made to reduce mercury content in alkaline batteries. As of now there is a 97 percent reduction and some newer alkaline batteries may have only one-tenth of original levels. Due to this reductions, most waste facilities, including Mecklenburg County, now accept alkaline batteries in landfills. Alkaline batteries include non-rechargeable types like AA, C, and D that are commonly used in radios and flashlights. **Alkaline batteries may be placed in a plastic bag and disposed of in regular trash.**

The Physical Plant manages battery recycling on campus and will accept small non-alkaline batteries. These include:

- Lithium Ion
- Small Sealed Lead Acid
- Nickel Zinc (Ni-Zn)
- Nickel Cadmium (Ni-Cd, Ni-Cad)
- Nickel Metal Hydride (Ni-MH)
- Cell Phones and their batteries

There are collection boxes located in the Alvarez Student Union and Physical Plant warehouse. Please place batteries individually in the plastic bags provided prior to depositing into the collection box. For large batteries or if no bags are available, cover terminals with tape.

If your battery isn't listed, contact the EHS Manager for guidance. Some batteries are collected as hazardous waste because they still contain high levels of heavy metals and acids that have detrimental impacts on the environment.

This program is intended only for batteries used on campus. Individuals should continue to use household hazardous waste days and manufacturers purchase/exchange programs for disposal of batteries generated at home or other off-campus locations. Please don't leave batteries outside pending recycling.

Battery Type	Commonly Found In	Pros	Cons
Alkaline  REGULAR TRASH	• Alarm Clocks • Calculators • Flashlights • TV remote controls • Remote control toys	Higher energy density. Moderate discharge rate. Cheap.	Most of them are non rechargeable.
Lithium Primary  STOP Call 2929	• Car keyless entry remotes • Watches • Pacemakers • Fire alarm devices	High energy density. Long shelf life.	Can't be recharged. Expensive. Toxic.
Nickel Cadmium  RECYCLE	• Cordless Power Tools • Cordless Phones • Digital Cameras and Video Cameras • Two-Way Radios	Good performance. Least expensive of secondary batteries. Can be recharged up to 1,000 times.	Moderate energy density. Rapid discharge. Toxic.
Nickel Metal Hydride  RECYCLE	• Cell Phones • Cordless Power Tools • Cordless Phones • Digital Cameras • Two-Way Radios	Cadmium-free. Good performance. Can be recharged up to 1,000 times. Performs well in high drain devices.	Expensive.
Lithium Ion  RECYCLE	• Cell Phones • Cordless Power Tools • Cordless Phones • Digital Cameras • Laptop Computers • Two-Way Radios	High energy density. Moderate discharge rate. Performs well in high drain devices. Excellent performance.	Expensive. Toxic.
Small Sealed Lead Acid  RECYCLE	• Mobility Scooters • Fire Emergency Devices • Emergency Exit Signs • UPS Back-Up Batteries	Moderate energy density.	High discharge rate. Toxic.