

# Sustainable Practices

## Battery Recycling



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### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY

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According to a report entitled, Household Universal Waste Generation in California, there were 507,259,000 batteries sold in California in the year 2001. According to survey results published in the report, only 0.55% of these batteries were recycled. **USC is committed to ensuring that all batteries generated from University operations are disposed of in an environmentally sound manner.**

### BATTERIES AS REGULATED WASTE

California hazardous waste regulations designate a category of hazardous wastes called "universal waste." This category includes many items, batteries, fluorescent lamps, cathode ray tubes, instruments that contain mercury, and others. In general, universal waste may not be discarded in solid waste landfills. **All batteries are considered hazardous waste in California when they are discarded.** This includes all batteries of sizes AAA, AA, C, D, button cell, 9 Volt, and all other batteries, both rechargeable and single use.

### BATTERY DISPOSAL

Do not place used batteries in or near trash cans or dumpsters. Ask your Home Department Coordinator (HDC) where to store them until EH&S can pick them up. State law prohibits the storage of used batteries for longer than one year, so please arrange for a collection by EH&S at least annually. Anyone on campus can schedule a waste pickup from the EH&S web page at: <http://capsnet.usc.edu/ehs/>.

### RECYCLING CONTAINERS

If your department generates batteries, contact EH&S to obtain battery recycling containers (typically 1-5 gallon pre-labeled buckets).

Batteries are potentially a valuable source of recyclable metal and they will be disposed of through an authorized recycling facility.

### SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Batteries are considered hazardous because of the metals and/or other toxic or corrosive materials contained within. If used batteries show evidence of leakage or damage, contact EH&S for clean-up and proper disposal.

EH&S Fact Sheets are intended for facilitating safety discussions in your department. Post the monthly topic on your departmental bulletin board.