

Battery Collection & Recycling: Call2Recycle For Municipalities

September 2021

Call2Recycle was established in 1994 by five battery manufacturing companies to provide battery collection and recycling services for rechargeable batteries. The program is national and is now funded by over 300 battery and battery-powered product manufacturers.

Call2Recycle provides **free recycling of rechargeable batteries to municipalities**. Municipalities can choose to also collect and recycle other batteries for a per-pound fee. Municipalities must collect batteries from the public and this can occur at town offices, transfer stations, recycling centers, or any other municipal facility.

For more information visit www.call2recycle.org or contact Customer Service at: customerservice@call2recycle.org or (877) 723-1297.

Accepted for Free: Rechargeable Batteries

Call2Recycle was designed to manage and recycle **rechargeable batteries** such as those found in cordless power tools, cordless phones, laptops, cellphones, cameras, two-way radios, biomedical equipment, and more.



Accepted for a Fee: Single-use Batteries

Some locations also choose to include **single-use batteries**, such as those commonly found in remote controls, car keyless entry remotes, watches, pacemakers, hearing aids, memory backup fire alarm devices, toys, and others, and include AA, AAA, 9V, C, and D cell batteries. These batteries do contain metal and other substances that are good to recover and keep out of the trash. However, the volume of single-use batteries collected can be substantial, which fills the boxes more quickly than if only rechargeable batteries are collected.



The current per-pound fees are 70 cents for alkaline batteries¹ and \$4.05 for smaller single-use lithium primary batteries (for example, lithium camera batteries and button cell and coin cell batteries)². Some locations that accept single-use batteries charge a small per-pound drop-off fee to recoup the cost of managing single-use batteries alongside the free recycling of rechargeable batteries.

Batteries Not Accepted Ever

Batteries weighing more than 11lbs; wet cell batteries (composed of a liquid), such as car or boat batteries; lithium-ion rechargeable batteries over 300-watt hours; lithium primary batteries with over 25 grams of lithium content, and/or any batteries that do not fit in a Call2Recycle collection box.

More information, including the *Battery Recycling Guide* can be found at: <https://www.call2recycle.org/what-can-i-recycle/>. Information on the process of recycling collected batteries, including *The Secret Life of Batteries* can be found at: <https://www.call2recycle.org/explore-the-secret-life-of-batteries/>.

¹ 40 cents recycling fee per pound plus 30 cents shipping fee per pound. Batteries are sorted and weighed at the recycling facility and the fees only apply to batteries that are not rechargeable

² \$3.75 recycling fee per pound plus 30 cents shipping fee per pound (fees only apply to the lithium primary batteries in the shipment)

What Do the Collection Boxes Look Like?

Call2Recycle display boxes are used for both collecting and shipping batteries. Whole cellphones can also be collected in Call2Recycle boxes. The box when closed for shipping measures 12.75 inches square and 8.75 inches high. The counter-top display kit includes all packing materials to safely collect and ship batteries and cellphones for recycling. Features include:

- Patented flame retardant box liner
- Holds 40-50 lbs. of mixed batteries and cellphones (note: boxes weighing more than 50 pounds are charged an extra fee)
- U.S. DOT Special Permit 14849 to comply with transport regulations
- Pre-paid shipping and recycling



What Are the Responsibilities?

Municipalities that collect batteries for recycling do have some responsibilities around training, sorting, and terminal protection to prevent fires. All municipalities that want to collect batteries must delegate at least one person to be responsible for each Call2Recycle box, sorting the batteries and properly protecting the terminals on lithium-ion and the other specified batteries, and preparing the box for shipment. That person must complete a short (minutes) online training and take a quick quiz. Facilities that wish to receive Call2Recycle boxes must first coordinate with Call2Recycle regarding these safety requirements.

Sorting

Municipalities that only want to do the free recycling of rechargeable batteries must sort through the collected batteries and remove all the batteries that are not rechargeable and put them in the trash. For recycling at no cost, only rechargeable batteries can be sent in the box.

Municipalities that are willing to pay the per-pound fee for batteries that are not rechargeable still need to sort through the collected batteries and ensure terminal protection as described below.

Terminal Protection

Prior to shipment, municipalities must ensure terminal protection for certain categories of batteries³ such as lithium-ion batteries. In recent years, lithium-ion batteries have caused fires because their terminals have made contact with metal or another battery. Therefore, it is essential that terminals are protected prior to shipment. Terminal protection means the battery is placed in its own plastic bag and/or the terminals are covered with a non-conductive tape (clear packing tape, electrical tape, or duct tape only). Other types of tape such as masking, painters, or regular “Scotch”™ tape are not appropriate and cannot be used. The Call2Recycle box kits come with some plastic bags and some facilities ask users to put each battery in a bag before placing it in the box.

More information on collection, sorting and terminal protection, and shipping, including the *Box Shipping Guidelines* and *Minimal Terminal Protection Quick Reference Guide for Boxes*, can be found in the “Box Shipping” area of <https://www.call2recycle.org/safety/collections-shipping/>.

To Get Started or Obtain More Information: Visit www.call2recycle.org or Contact Customer Service at customerservice@call2recycle.org or (877) 723-1297.

³ Lithium-ion and lithium primary; button/coin cells; small, sealed lead acid (SSLA); alkaline & carbon zinc that are greater than 12 volts; & nickel batteries that are greater than 9 volts