



## FACT SHEET

### Household Batteries

#### Hazards

- Batteries burned in waste combustion facilities can release mercury or cadmium to the air and water, ultimately entering the food chain and posing health threats to people and the environment.

#### Description of Battery Categories:

- Alkaline batteries (AAA, AA, C, D and 9 volt): since 1994, most types contain no added mercury, and only contain trace amounts that are not hazardous. These batteries are marked “no added mercury” or have a green tree logo.
- Nickel-cadmium rechargeable batteries (NiCads) exist in many sizes and shapes and are marked **RECHARGEABLE**. Some may be built into rechargeable appliances. NiCads contain cadmium, a metal that is toxic to humans when inhaled or ingested.
- Button batteries (small, round, silver-colored, used in watches and hearing aids): Many button batteries contain mercury, a metal that is toxic to humans when inhaled or ingested.
- Lithium batteries (AA, C, 9 volt and button; mainly used in computers and cameras). Lithium is reactive with water, and has caused serious fires.

#### Handling

- Store in a secure, dry place out of the reach of children and pets. Button batteries can accidentally be swallowed because they are small and slippery.
- When storing rechargeable batteries for collection, keep in a vented, non-metal container. Rechargeable batteries should be placed individually in plastic bags before being stored together with other rechargeables.

#### Management Options

- Alkaline batteries: Domestically manufactured batteries made after 1994 no longer contain mercury and can be disposed of in the trash.
- Nickel-cadmium rechargeable batteries: **DO NOT DISPOSE OF IN THE TRASH**. Take to a retail collection location or dispose of at a Household Hazardous Products Collection Center, or save for a household hazardous waste collection event.
- Button batteries: **DO NOT DISPOSE OF IN THE TRASH**. Many stores selling watches or hearing aids will accept spent button batteries. If your trash is handled by a waste-to-energy facility, find out if they have a mercury waste collection program, save for a household hazardous waste collection event, or hold for disposal at a Household Hazardous Products Collection Center.
- Lithium batteries: Hold for disposal at a Household Hazardous Products Collection Center, or save for a household hazardous waste collection event.

**REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE**

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