

# Dry-Cell Battery Management Evolves It Will Be as Easy as “1-2-3”

At the beginning of 2010, new U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations about the management of dry-cell batteries throughout the United States will go in effect. Because dry-cell batteries can short circuit and catch fire while being transported, the DOT will require enclosing each hazardous dry-cell battery in a plastic bag to cover its terminals prior to transport.

Figuring out how to manage batteries in Morris County, NJ under this new regulation can be as easy as “1-2-3.” **One (1)**, throw alkaline (non-hazardous and use-once) dry-cell batteries into the trash; **two (2)**, recycle rechargeable batteries using Call2Recycle® drop-off boxes; and **three (3)**, take all other types of batteries to a household hazardous waste disposal program where they will be properly bagged and managed as hazardous waste. Additional details about proper battery management can be found below.

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| <h1>1</h1> <p><b>Alkaline Batteries</b><br/>(non-hazardous and use-once)<br/>Throw in the Garbage</p>  <p>↓</p>  | <h1>2</h1> <p><b>Rechargeable Batteries</b><br/>(hazardous and multi-use)<br/>Recycle with Call2Recycle®</p>  <p>↓</p>  | <h1>3</h1> <p><b>Other Batteries</b><br/>(hazardous and use-once)<br/>Take to Household Hazardous Waste Program</p>  <p>↓</p>  |
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See page 2 for a detailed description of the “1-2-3s” of dry-cell battery management or contact the MCMUA using the information below.

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**1. Alkaline Batteries** - Use-once alkaline batteries such as AAA, AA, C, D and 9-volt batteries produced by manufacturers like Energizer and Duracell as well as less common and/or generic manufacturers now fall below Federal and state hazardous waste standards and can and should be thrown out in the ordinary garbage. These non-hazardous batteries do not need to be individually bagged prior to throwing into the garbage. It is that easy and accounts for the majority of batteries discarded. The MCMUA will stop accepting batteries for recycling from Morris County municipalities beginning in November 2009.

**2. Rechargeable Batteries** - The Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation (RBRC) operates Call2Recycle®, a free rechargeable battery recycling program. Call2Recycle® sets up retailers and public agencies as rechargeable battery drop-off locations at no cost to the participant. Currently, Home Depot, Radio Shack, Lowe's and Verizon Wireless all participate in the Call2Recycle® program at all their retail locations. These locations are provided with a drop-off box with small plastic bags so the batteries can be individually bagged in accordance with the new DOT regulations. The RBRC pays all the costs associated with providing drop-off boxes, including transportation and recycling. Call **1-877-2-RECYCLE** or use their website at <http://www.call2recycle.org> to find the closest public drop-off point.

Additionally, Call2Recycle® will provide free-of-charge drop-off boxes to any non-residential entity for the collection and recycling of their own rechargeable batteries. All one has to do is sign up online at <http://www.call2recycle.org>. Retailers and community recycling centers open to the public will be listed on the Call2Recycle® zip code locator and toll-free help-lines to encourage residents to recycle. Additionally, public agencies and businesses can still participate in the Call2Recycle® program without being advertised as a public drop-off location if they do not want to be listed as such. Since everything is free of charge, the MCMUA is encouraging every business and/or public agency to request a drop-off box for its office or work site.

Batteries covered under the Call2Recycle program include:

- Nickel Cadmium (Ni-Cd)
- Nickel Metal Hydride (Ni-MH)
- Lithium Ion (Li-ion)
- Nickel Zinc (Ni-Zn)
- Small Sealed Lead - less than 11 lbs (Pb)



Rechargeable batteries are found in cordless power tools, cellular and cordless phones, laptop computers, digital cameras, two-way radios, camcorders, and remote control toys. Rechargeable batteries sometimes look like regular alkaline batteries. The label on the battery will indicate if it is rechargeable. Note that cell phones can also be collected through the Call2Recycle® program.

**3. Other Batteries** - Most button cell batteries still contain mercury and should be taken to a household hazardous waste program for proper management. Lead-acid car and boat batteries (over 11 lbs) should also be taken to a household hazardous waste program. Information about Morris County's household hazardous waste programs can be found at the MCMUA website at <http://mcmua.com/hazardouswaste/index.htm> or by calling **973-829-8006**.