

Christmas has come and gone and just about now, those batteries from all the new toys, phones, and music players have died and been recharged or disposed of and replaced. In 2004, Canadians purchased around 450 million batteries and disposed of about 348 million batteries. That number is growing.



Many of the batteries we dispose of **contain heavy metals that pose a threat to our environment** if not dealt with properly, yet **60% of Canadians still put dead batteries in the garbage**

. Only about 25% of us dispose of batteries properly. The rest of us tuck them away somewhere in our homes, either because we don't know what to do with them and probably have it on the bottom of a to do list that found its way into paper recycling bin eons ago.

There are three types of batteries to dispose of

- **Non-rechargeable batteries** also called alkaline batteries are the least dangerous of the three and many provinces do not have provincial programs set up for them. However, you can still find retailers and private companies that do have programs set up. The only national retail program that I know of is the Future Shop/Best Buy program so if you happen to shop there, you can drop off your non-rechargeable batteries. I called them to ask for more information but just got the run around so what happens next is a mystery.

- **Rechargeable batteries** contain toxic substances such as nickel cadmium (Ni-Cd), nickel metal hydride (Ni-MH), lithium ion (Li-ion) and small sealed lead (Pb). Canada has a

program that has been running since 1994, Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation (RBRC). Canadian Tire takes rechargeable batteries and old cell phones nationally so if you are looking to dispose of old batteries, that's one place. If not, go to

<http://www.rbrc.org/>

and enter your postal code to get a list of place to return your used rechargeable batteries.

Either way they head down to the States, where the materials are separated and reclaimed.

- **Automotive batteries** are often recycled when you get your car battery changed and the good news is that about 90% of car batteries in Canada are recycled which means that the 8 to 12 kg of lead in each battery does not leach into our soil and waterways. If you do need to dispose of one, call your local Canadian Tire and ask as some stores accept old car batteries.

{linkr:related;keywords:recycle;exclude:81,111,136,112,72,105,123,146,84,106,130,138,153,155,156,96,169,161,163;limit:5;title:If+you+like+this%2C+try+these}