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Recycle Lithium-Ion Batteries: Protecting the Environment is a Gift One Can Give Mother Nature

Batteries accepted at all Snohomish County's waste and recycling facilities free of charge

EVERETT, Wash., Dec. 13, 2019 – Millions of electronic devices will be given as gifts this year during the holiday season powered by batteries, with an ever-increasing number requiring lithium-ion batteries. When those batteries wear out, many people just toss them in the garbage not thinking of the consequences. In the spirit of the holidays, Snohomish County Public Works Solid Waste Division is asking you to partner with them and give Mother Nature a gift by keeping batteries out of garbage trucks, transfer stations and landfills, and, instead, recycle them.

“Batteries have metals and chemicals that leach into soil, get into the water, and when they degrade, can release pollutants into the environment,” Snohomish County Solid Waste Superintendent Linda Rhoades-Clarke said. “Lithium-ion batteries are especially dangerous because they are a potential fire hazard. It is important to protect our environment as best we can and avoid costly future cleanup costs. Let’s recycle batteries.”

The use of lithium-ion batteries is becoming more common since they power many electronics, such as games, power tools, phones and other devices. It is not uncommon to see such batteries swell up in devices, like cell phones and computers. Left unattended and given the right conditions, the batteries can potentially start a fire. A Snohomish County transfer facility has experienced at least one fire suspected to have been caused by a damaged lithium-ion battery. The Tri-City Herald newspaper reported earlier this year that a damaged lithium battery was confirmed as the cause of a landfill fire in Benton County.

Lithium-ion batteries are considered household hazardous waste by Snohomish County Code. The county’s Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off Station accepts lithium-ion and all other household use batteries. Hours of operation are 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and is located at 3434 McDougall Ave, in Everett. Residential customers can also visit the [Snohomish County Recycling and Transfer Stations and Drop Boxes](#), which have designated areas to drop off batteries free of charge.

Do not try to remove embedded lithium-ion batteries from their device. The Solid Waste division will ship the entire device for battery removal and recycling.

Less than three percent of lithium-ion batteries are recycled, according to [Call2Recycle](#), a nonprofit organization that promotes battery recycling. The organization states that numerous landfill fires have occurred in California, with many from batteries.

“Thankfully, we haven’t had a problem in Snohomish County like we have seen in other parts of the country, but we want to make sure that an avoidable fire never happens,” Snohomish County Public Works Solid Waste Director Matt Zybas said. “The best way to do that is to keep batteries out of our regular trash and send them for recycling through our household hazardous waste facility.”

To learn more about recycling batteries, call the Snohomish County Household Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Station at (425) 388-6050, or visit <https://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/477/Hazardous-Waste>.

About Snohomish County Public Works

The Snohomish County Public Works Department constructs and maintains county roads; controls and manages surface water quantity, quality, and fish habitats; and oversees the recycling and disposal of solid waste. The department’s main office is located at 3000 Rockefeller Ave., Everett, WA 98201. For more information about Snohomish County Public Works, visit www.snohomishcountywa.gov/PublicWorks.

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