

Why We Need A Rechargeable Battery Recycling Law in Washington State



Rechargeable Battery Stewardship: Good for Washington's Residents and Local Governments

- Consumer use of rechargeable batteries is increasing and safe recycling of these batteries prevents toxic metals and other materials from harming people and our environment.
- Recycling batteries also recaptures valuable metals and other substances that can be returned to commerce and remanufactured into new products.
- Washington State is fortunate to have 486 active rechargeable battery collection locations funded by battery manufacturers through the Call2Recycle program.¹



Many rechargeable batteries contain toxic heavy metals such as cadmium and lead.



Call2Recycle is a voluntary product stewardship program provided by the major rechargeable battery manufacturers. The program covers the costs of on-site signage, and collection boxes, shipping and processing.

The Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation, which operates the Call2Recycle program on behalf of battery manufacturers, has proposed the Small Rechargeable Battery Recycling Act to the Washington State Legislature.

\$1.6 million . . . *The direct savings to local governments are only a small part of the equation. The annual benefit to Washington communities from Call2Recycle's rechargeable battery stewardship program is estimated at over \$1.6 million.²*

Call2Recycle is Convenient for Consumers

The majority of Call2Recycle's collection sites are located in retail stores that sell products using rechargeable batteries. Worn out rechargeable batteries get dropped off when new ones are needed.

Call2Recycle Saves Money for Local Governments

About 50 government agencies in 30 counties use Call2Recycle's program to recycle batteries collected at their municipal facilities. Many other government agencies, such as fire and police departments, utilize the Call2Recycle program to properly recycle their own batteries.



If Call2Recycle has an Effective Voluntary Program, Why is Legislation Needed?



Call2Recycle cannot remain solvent and viable in Washington without legislation to level the playing field so all rechargeable battery manufacturers pay their fair share.

There are now more rechargeable batteries and new types of rechargeables on the market than 18 years ago when Call2Recycle was formed by many of the major battery manufacturers. Many of the newcomer manufacturers do not support Call2Recycle financially, though Call2Recycle accepts and processes their products. "Free riders" threaten the existence of the Call2Recycle by increasing costs without paying a share of expenses. This is why responsible battery manufacturers are supporting passage of the Small Rechargeable Battery Stewardship Act.

What the Small Rechargeable Battery Stewardship Act will do:

- All manufacturers and marketers of small rechargeable batteries sold in the state would need to participate in an approved recycling program and provide equitable funding. The bill applies to rechargeables that are easily removable from products.
- Manufacturers and marketers complying with the law are empowered to seek damages from "free riders," which will compel those companies to either join Call2Recycle or provide their own stewardship program.
- The legislation defines smart standards for all recycling programs to ensure safe and effective recycling of rechargeable batteries in our state.

Legislation is needed to "level the playing field" so all rechargeable battery manufacturers pay their fair share.

Benefits of the Legislation for Washington Communities:

- With the passage of legislation in Washington State, the Call2Recycle recycling program will be able to maintain and expand its already substantial collection network.
- Consumers will continue to have many convenient battery collection locations.
- Local governments will continue their partnership with Call2Recycle, saving money to benefit ratepayers and taxpayers.
- More rechargeable batteries will be recycled, ensuring that more metals and harmful substances are captured for proper recycling and handling.
- As new battery chemistries are developed and as single-use battery manufacturers move forward with collecting their batteries, a fully funded and stable rechargeable battery stewardship program will not only serve as a good model, it could evolve to collect these other battery types as well.

Learn more at:
www.ProductStewardship.net
www.Call2Recycle.org

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1. Twenty-two local solid waste and hazardous waste plans in the state refer to or call for product stewardship programs, such as the Call2Recycle program.
 2. Product Stewardship Institute's Financial Benefits Calculator Tool is available at: www.productstewardship.us/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=687. Learn more at www.ProductStewardship.net and www.Call2Recycle.org.

The Northwest Product Stewardship Council is a coalition of government organizations in Washington and Oregon working to support product stewardship approaches to reduce public costs, increase accessibility to services, attain higher environmental benefits, and help drive improvements in product design that promote environmental sustainability.