

## SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY

THERE ARE TWO MAIN REASONS BATTERIES NEED TO BE RECYCLED:

1. **Most batteries contain toxic materials:** They must be properly recycled so they don't leach out any toxic metals into the environment that can contaminate soil and pollute drinking water.
2. **Some batteries can self-ignite and catch fire if the battery terminals are not properly taped or insulated** before disposal. (search lithium-ion rechargeable battery fires)

The US Department of Transportation (DOT) and US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations on proper battery disposal advise:

- Never mix damaged batteries with other batteries designated for disposal. Put damaged batteries into a separate zip lock bag before disposal.
- Use clear tape or electrical tape to fully cover and insulate all terminals for battery chemistries **over 9 volts, with button cell terminals on top.**
- Use clear tape or electrical tape to fully cover and insulate all lithium battery terminals. **Lithium batteries always need to be insulated or taped** before they are stored or disposed of.
  - Lithium batteries will always have a lithium mark on their label, which makes them easier to identify.
  - Examples of common lithium batteries include:
    - The **new longest-lasting AAA batteries**, made of lithium metal. They are ultra-light, look like AA alkaline batteries, and contain a lot of energy. They can self-ignite if not properly disposed of.
    - **AA batteries that say lithium on the label.**

**Most batteries regulated as a Universal Waste by the EPA are required to be recycled or disposed of within 12 months.**

WNC has two designated battery disposal locations for your taped and zip-locked batteries:

- In Carson City: EH&S Office in Reynolds 113B Hallway.
- In Fallon: Administration Area in Virgil Getto Hall.

**CONTACT [katherine.strain@wnc.edu](mailto:katherine.strain@wnc.edu) IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO REQUEST A BATTERY DISPOSAL CONTAINER FOR YOUR WNC DEPARTMENT. WHEN  $\frac{3}{4}$  FULL, CONTACT EH&S FOR DISPOSAL.**

## BATTERY DISPOSAL

### How to Package and Store Batteries Prior to Recycling and Disposal at Home

When in doubt:

1. Tape the terminals of all batteries with clear tape or electrical tape.
2. Store different battery types in separate zip lock bags to avoid dangerous chemical interactions.
3. Then dispose of the zip locked batteries in a non-reactive, heavy-duty, plastic container.
4. Your local Household Hazardous Waste location accepts batteries for recycling and disposal.

Lithium-Ion battery labels may include the word "CAUTION," Lithium, or the symbols below:



Watch this short video on how to properly tape battery terminals: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbRjZuzQFYk> (50 sec)

### CONTACT:

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