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National Waste
& Recycling Association™

Policy Statement on Battery EPR
January 2025

Short Version:

Lithium-ion batteries require special handling for proper recycling and disposal. They should never be placed in waste or curbside recycling bins as they can cause fires, endangering people and waste and recycling infrastructure. The best solution is to use take-back programs designed for safe collection and recycling. The National Waste & Recycling Association and the Solid Waste Association of North America are committed to promoting awareness and supporting policy initiatives that ensure proper battery disposal to protect workers, communities and the environment.

Long Version:

Batteries, particularly but not exclusively lithium-ion batteries, present significant challenges for recycling and disposal due to the potential for hazardous reactions. To ensure safety and sustainability, batteries must be handled with specialized care through designated take-back programs, which facilitate proper collection, transport and recycling and a safe end-of-life outcome.

Batteries should never be placed in household waste or curbside recycling bins. Improper disposal can result in fires, posing serious risks to consumers, waste and recycling workers, and critical infrastructure. These incidents jeopardize public safety, disrupt recycling processes and lead to costly damages.

The National Waste & Recycling Association and the Solid Waste Association of North America support legislation that promotes the safe disposal of all batteries with a particular emphasis on small to medium size lithium-ion batteries. Our position includes requirements for effective take-back programs with documented end-of-life certainty and enhanced public awareness. We are committed to working with stakeholders to advance economically sound and responsible recycling solutions, and to protect our communities, workers and the environment.