

# Tales from Tim's Recycling Bin - Battery Recycling

It's the time of year where we burn through lots of batteries. What with electronic gadgets we got as presents or devices that light up during our long, dark nights. Devices and gadgets which all need that battery power to run right.

I picked the word "burn" on purpose. Because by now most of you have heard about the battery fire that led to Hennepin County pulling the battery recycling barrels from City Hall and the Library. Yes, in addition to containing hazardous material, some rechargeable batteries can start fires if not disposed of properly.

In the waste industry there's a term called a "hot load" which is when the garbage or recycling starts on fire in the back of the truck. Google "hot load garbage truck" and you'll find stories from throughout the country of drivers dropping a load of burning material out the back of their truck in order to prevent the truck from catching on fire and possibly exploding. In Minnesota, a recycling facility in Blaine was destroyed when a battery sparked a pile of paper on fire. And check out the photo at left of a hot load dropped on the street in Brooklyn Center.



So, when your batteries die, don't dump them in your trash or recycling cart. You can still bring batteries to the Hennepin County Drop-Off Facility, 8100 Jefferson Highway. And we will continue taking them at the Special Materials Drop-Off Day.

If you can't remove the battery from the device (e.g. a small electronic device or a cordless screwdriver), bring the entire item to the Hennepin County Drop-Off Facility.

Until next time, keep recycling your batteries my friends.