

Tales from Tim's Recycling Bin – Battling with Batteries

Winter's coming. It's dark when I get up in the morning. The other day I needed to check on the plants in my garden before heading to work so I pulled a flashlight out of my junk drawer. Pushed the on button, nothing happened, so I pushed it again, still nothing. Shook it a couple of times as if that would magically bring the flashlight back to work. Nope, dead batteries. Thank goodness it wasn't an emergency.

Now's the time lots of us will be discovering dead batteries. After you replace them how do you discard them? Batteries can be recycled. In fact, rechargeable batteries like the ones in our electronic devices and button batteries should be recycled because they contain hazardous materials. But you need to do it right, so something doesn't go wrong.



Unlike single-use batteries, rechargeable batteries don't fully discharge. That means even though they won't power your cordless screwdriver anymore they still have a little juice left in them. That juice can create enough heat to start paper or even some plastics on fire. Throughout the country garbage and recycling facilities are catching on fire because of batteries. There was one in Blaine not too long ago.

Keep those dead batteries out of your trash and recycling carts. Instead bring them to the Hennepin County Drop-Off Facility, 8100 Jefferson Highway, Brooklyn Park. We also accept them at the Special Materials Drop-Off Day. The next one will be April 29 at the Operations & Maintenance Facility, 8300 Noble Avenue.

Until next time lets win the battle against battery fires my friends.