

The ERP Schools Batteries Recycling Campaign... FAQs



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What is the Battery campaign about?

The batteries campaign has one single, simple, focus and that is to get batteries out of the waste stream (black bags/bins) and into recycling where they need to be. As batteries are small it is all too easy for them to be put in the bin, out of sight and out of mind, but that is not environmentally sustainable and, in addition to being hugely wasteful, is actually harmful.

Why participate?

Why not? ERP UK has an inclusive and easy-to-join scheme for school pupils that runs every year and has been hugely popular with more and more schools joining each year.

Pupils in participating schools really enjoy bringing in end-of-life batteries to school, as and when they have them, and adding them to the box in reception.

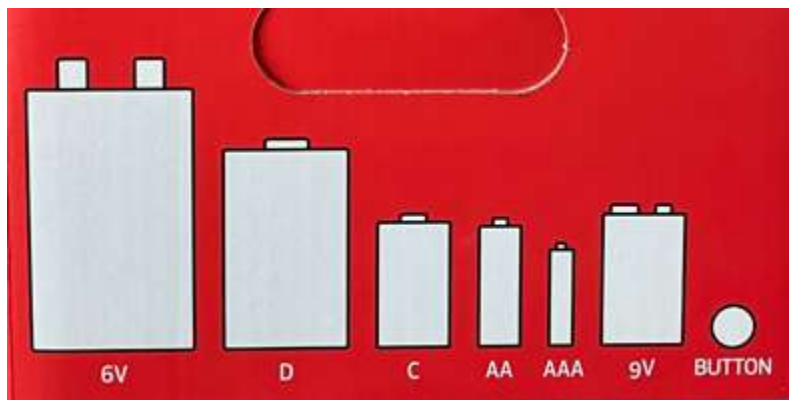
Why it's good for the planet...

Batteries are made using many different materials. Some of these are difficult to find on earth and are precious. It makes sense to capture and recycle batteries that have reached the end of their lives so that they can be recycled. The recycling process takes the batteries apart and separates out the component materials. Those materials can then be used again to manufacture more new batteries or other products. This is a very good way of doing a good turn for our planet. We can't save everything but we can all do something and this is a fun and easy way to do our bit.

What types of batteries are there?

Anything under 4kg is classed as household but typically, these batteries in the photo below illustrate what types we're looking for. They are everyday batteries found in rechargeable or single-use battery-operated electrical and electronic equipment like radios, cameras and toys, remote controls and hearing-aid devices and many

more... there are an awful lot of batteries out there and we mean to capture them so that they can be recycled.



How do we collect?

We arrange for our collector to visit each participating school once per year. This is typically in the Summer holidays before Autumn term begins for health and safety reasons.



The liners in the box – and any other full liners – are collected from the school's reception area, weighed and marked as belonging to that particular school and are carefully transported away to the storage company. These batteries are safely

stored until the whole schools programme has been completed for the year and are then transported together to the final UK destination.

What happens then?

Once all of the batteries have been collected, they are bulked (put in a large container all together) and taken out of the UK to our treatment processors who are located all over Europe. At this point, the batteries are sorted and processed for recycling.

Did you know that at least ONE QUARTER of any battery is made up of steel? Or that steel can be recycled again and again... forever?

Why is battery recycling so important?

Aside from the fact that every component of a battery is a valuable and often rare earth resource, batteries need to be treated carefully. Once they have reached the end of its useful life it needs to be taken to a recycling facility where it will be safely stored with other batteries before being taken for processing and re-manufacture into new products.

Whilst batteries are generally safe to handle they do not respond well to being thrown into bins/black bags and having other wastes (wet and dry) thrown on top of them. Corrosion and other damage to the battery can occur which can potentially cause fires.

If you've ever seen a video of a refuse vehicle fire, the most likely cause is A BATTERY.

What are the benefits of recycling batteries?

In addition to the valuable metals batteries are comprised of, they also contain hazardous and dangerous chemicals that are both harmful to health and also to the environment. These chemicals, heavy metals and acids cause major pollution to land and water if they end up in landfill. Why risk it? Recycle them and we can stop all of that from happening.

We can keep getting these materials from the earth, can't we?

No, we can't. The earth's resources are not infinite and batteries contain valuable materials like nickel, zinc, cobalt and lead. Those are not renewable, when they're gone they're gone and that's forever. All of those materials though can be recycled, again and again, so keep your batteries in the recycling loop and they'll carry on – in new products.