

FLUORESCENT LAMPS, BATTERIES, AND ELECTRONICS CANNOT BE PLACED IN THE TRASH

As of February 2006, the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) adopted new regulations governing fluorescent lamps, batteries, and electronics because they are deemed hazardous to people and the environment. It is now a violation of hazardous waste laws to place these items (also known as Universal Waste or U-waste) in your dumpster/trash cart. They must be separated from the regular trash and collected for safe disposal.

Fluorescent lamps

Fluorescent lamps produce light when an electric current passes through the lamp and vaporizes the mercury to generate light. Fluorescent light tubes and bulbs, high-intensity discharge (HID), metal halide, sodium and neon bulbs all contain mercury vapors. If broken, mercury can be released into the environment and may cause nerve damage as well as a host of other serious illnesses.

Batteries

Universal waste batteries include rechargeable nickel-cadmium batteries, silver button batteries, mercury batteries, small sealed lead acid batteries, most alkaline batteries, and carbon-zinc batteries. Batteries are considered hazardous because of the metals and/or other toxic or corrosive materials contained within. Batteries are potentially a valuable source of recyclable metal.

Electronics

Many components of electronic equipment—including metals, plastic, and glass—can be reused or recycled, while others may present environmental hazards if not managed correctly. Certain components of some electronic products contain materials that render them hazardous, depending on their condition and density. For instance, California law currently views non-functioning CRTs (cathode ray tubes) from televisions and monitor as hazardous, as they contain mercury.



Mercury is Toxic to People: Mercury is a powerful neurotoxin that affects every aspect of brain and nerve function. It can cause tremors, memory loss, mental impairment, and many other complications in the nervous system.

Mercury is Toxic to the Environment: Bacteria from river and estuary bottom sediments produce a highly toxic form of mercury through a process called "methylation". The methylated mercury accumulates in aquatic organisms, making the fish from those bodies of water dangerous to eat.



Recycling/Disposal Information

When a home or business owner accumulates a sufficient recycling quantity or reaches the one-year accumulation limit, waste fluorescent lamps, batteries and electronics must be collected and transported to a recycling facility or another universal waste handler.

Fluorescent lamps



California's Department of Toxic Substances Control adopted special regulations that explain how to manage and recycle fluorescent tubes. These regulations allow businesses to accumulate spent tubes for up to one year before sending them to a recycling firm. They require only informal training for most employees handling spent tubes, and allow you to ship spent tubes to a lamp recycler or to transport them to a lamp recycler yourself without using a hazardous waste hauler. These regulations also require generators to keep some form of documentation to demonstrate tubes were managed properly.

These regulations do not authorize the use of "tube crushers." If you are operating one of these devices, you should contact the Department of Toxic Substances Control regarding permit requirements.

Businesses have three main options to dispose of their fluorescent lamps:

- 1) Mailing box programs:** Many recycling facilities use mail-in boxes to collect waste mercury lamps. The recycler sells the box at a fixed price, which includes shipping costs. The customer fills the box with waste lamps and ships it back to the recycler. To find a lamp recycling company, type in "recycle fluorescent lamps" in your internet search bar.
- 2) Lighting contractors:** Large businesses often pay lighting contractors to replace all of the mercury lamps in their facilities every three to four years. The business and lighting contractor determine which party will send the waste mercury lamps to a recycling facility.
- 3) Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator Program (CESQG):** See text box.

Batteries



Businesses have three main options to dispose of waste batteries:

- 1) Mailing box programs:** Many recycling facilities use mail-in boxes to collect alkaline and lithium batteries. The recycler sells the box at a fixed price, which includes shipping costs. The customer fills the box with batteries and ships it back to the recycler. To find a battery recycling company, type in "recycle alkaline batteries" in your internet search bar.
- 2) Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator Program (CESQG):** See text box.
- 3) Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation (RBRC):** Rechargeable batteries can be recycled for free through the RBRC. Request a free mail-in box to collect your rechargeable batteries online at www.call2recycle.com.

Electronics

All Yolo County businesses **and** residents can bring small electronics to the landfill for free recycling on a daily basis (a fee applies for microwaves and larger appliances). This includes radios, TVs, monitors, computers, keyboards, printers, cell phones, rechargeable batteries, laser and ink printer cartridges.



Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator Program (CESQG)

The Yolo County Central Landfill accepts hazardous waste from businesses through the Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator Program (CESQG). Fluorescent lamps, batteries, paint, pesticides etc. can be disposed of through this program. There is a fee to participate, depending on the types and amounts of hazardous waste disposed. This may be the easiest way for businesses to dispose of it's hazardous waste, depending on the types and amounts of wastes produced. See www.davisrecycling.org for more information, or call 666-8729.



City of Davis Public Works 757-5686
www.davisrecycling.org

