How to Handle Universal Waste at Your Facility

Universal waste is a subset of hazardous waste, which includes materials such as bulbs, batteries, ballasts, and other mercury-containing devices, and should be removed from your facility's site within 12 months.

Did you know?

When disposed of improperly, materials like mercury and lead can contaminate the environment and cause serious health and environmental risks.

Federal universal waste regulations (Title 40, Part 273) say facilities are required to properly recycle their universal waste and cannot leave material on-site longer than 12 months.

Bulbs, batteries, ballasts, and other mercury-containing items are a subset of hazardous waste called "universal waste."

There are two main methods[1] when it comes to recycling your facility's bulbs, batteries, ballasts, and other mercury-containing devices.

Mail-Back Recycling Kits

- Safely and sustainably recycle bulbs and batteries at your convenience with a pre-paid, pre-addressed box or bucket[1]
- Perfect way to regularly manage smaller amounts of waste
- Box or bucket sizes usually range from small to large
- Typically dry-cell batteries, non-PCB ballasts, and assorted lamps are only acceptable
- Certificate of Recycling should be provided to prove compliance with federal and state regulations

Pack-Up & Pick-Up Service

- After sorting and packaging your material, a trailer is provided to load and haul the material away for recycling
- Perfect for facility clean-outs, fixture retrofits and upgrades
- Typically a solution for large quantities of bulbs, batteries, ballasts, and other mercury-containing devices
- Allows for recycling of specialty materials, including crushed or broken bulbs, PCB ballasts and thermostats
- Certificate of Recycling should be provided to prove compliance with federal and state regulations

To learn more about recycling bulbs and batteries, visit **RepublicServices.com**.

To receive your first month free with the purchase of new recycling and waste services, visit **Info.RepublicServices.com/IFMA**.

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1. Product offerings may vary depending on trash provider

Top Bulb & Battery Recycling Questions

What is the difference between Bulb & Battery and Electronics Recycling?

Bulb & Battery Recycling is used to safely recycle bulbs, batteries, ballasts, and other mercury-containing devices. Electronics Recycling is used for the recycling of unwanted or outdated electronic devices, typically anything with a power cord.

Why is it important to properly recycle bulbs, batteries and ballasts?

Due to federal regulations, Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations – Part 273, bulbs, batteries, and ballasts must be recycled properly and cannot be stored on a business' site for more than 12 months.

Also, if managed improperly and placed in landfills, this hazardous waste can release potentially harmful chemicals into the environment, such as lead and mercury. Mercury is so toxic that one-quarter of a teaspoon can contaminate all the fish in a 20-acre lake[2].

Batteries can also be a fire hazard. Proper disposal helps reduce the risk of fire at your home, business, or community.

What are the environmental benefits of recycling bulbs, batteries and ballasts?

Bulbs, batteries, and ballasts are made of valuable, highly-engineered materials that can be reused in future manufacturing processes. Furthermore, recycling these materials keeps harmful chemicals, such as lead and mercury, out of the environment, reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills, and decreases the chances of fire hazards at landfills and recycling facilities.

What type of items can be recycled?

- CFLs
- HIDs
- Fluorescent bulbs
- 2-pin bulbs
- 4-pin bulbs
- Other mercury-containing bulbs
- Dry-cell batteries
- Wet-cell batteries
- Lead-acid batteries
- Non-PCB ballasts and capacitors
- PCB ballasts and capacitors
- Other mercury-containing items, such as thermometers

Who We Are

Republic Services, Inc.® is a leader in the U.S. environmental services industry. Through its subsidiaries, the Company provides superior customer experience while fostering a sustainable Blue Planet® for future generations to enjoy a cleaner, safer and healthier world. For more information, visit **RepublicServices.com**.

2. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

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