

Box clever with WEEE Ireland's *My Battery Recycling Box*

This year millions of small batteries will be used in Irish households to power appliances ranging from cameras to calculators, mp3s to mobile phones, toys to torches. WEEE Ireland, the Irish compliance scheme for electrical and battery recycling is hoping to encourage more people to collect waste batteries for recycling in the home and office with the launch of *My Battery Recycling Box*. Under EU legislation Ireland needs to be recycling over 45% of its batteries by 2016.

Speaking at the launch Leo Donovan from WEEE Ireland highlighted the importance of battery recycling *"Due to their small size, it's all too easy to throw waste portable batteries into the normal rubbish but it's more important to collect them for recycling to protect our environment"*. *My Battery Recycling Box* will be available free of charge at participating retailers, and is being distributed directly to many homes and schools throughout the country.

All batteries can be recycled for free by bring them to retailers supplying similar types. Since 2008, WEEE Ireland has distributed over 100,000 larger blue collection boxes to retailers and other outlets for the public to deposit their waste batteries. Waste batteries can also be brought to local recycling centres or WEEE Ireland special collection events. The scheme also has initiatives collecting larger waste batteries such as farm fence, car batteries and some industrial types for recycling. Details on all of these can be found on www.recyclefree.ie.

Waste batteries can contain chemicals and heavy metals which can cause harm to human health and the environment if not managed properly in a recycling process. Some of the metals can be processed for use again in industry including in battery manufacturing, saving on resource use. Using rechargeable batteries is also a positive step for the environment.

Ireland has punched above its weight so far in Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) recycling since the introduction of the WEEE Directive in Ireland in 2005. In 2008 WEEE Ireland collected of over 9kg of WEEE per capita in its collection area – double the EU target for the third year running. The scheme hopes, with the help of consumers to be able to report a similar gold medal story for batteries over the coming years.

This initiative is funded by WEEE Ireland battery members - Irish importers and brand owners of batteries - as part of their Producer Responsibility under the Battery Directive.

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