

NEWS RELEASE
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Tullamore Gets Charged as Ireland's Battery Recycling Capital
An Taoiseach Launches Ireland's First Public Battery Collection and Recycling Scheme

An Taoiseach, Brian Cowen TD today launched Ireland's first ever co-ordinated public battery collection and recycling scheme at the Bridge Centre in Tullamore, Co Offaly. The scheme, which is being piloted throughout Tullamore for 3 months, is the initiative of the national compliance scheme for electronic recycling, WEEE (Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment) Ireland and local company, KMK Metals Recycling with the support of Tullamore Town Council and the Tullamore Chamber of Commerce.

Over one hundred deposit boxes have been placed in retail outlets throughout the town to allow members of the public to dispose of any depleted batteries for safe collection and recycling. All kinds of batteries from consumer products can be placed in the deposit boxes including alkaline batteries, batteries from old mobile phones or laptops and lithium batteries from watches and clocks.

Information wallets with deposit bags are being issued to 12,000 homes in and around Tullamore encouraging householders to collect and bring old batteries to local deposit boxes located around the town. Public information notices are also being displayed throughout the town in shops, restaurants and all public amenity venues. Local primary schools and Tullamore Public Library have also been enrolled in the collection effort with special deposit boxes being installed for the duration of the scheme. WEEE Ireland expects to roll out a nationwide battery collection and recycling scheme in the autumn.

It is estimated that Irish consumers use several million alkaline batteries each year – nearly all of which have traditionally been sent to landfill via the rubbish bin. In addition, there are an estimated 2 million broken mobile phone handset batteries discarded annually.

Speaking at the launch, An Taoiseach, Brian Cowen TD said: "I am delighted to be involved with this recycling initiative with WEEE Ireland here in Tullamore. Irish people have taken to recycling in a very positive way. Our Government is committed to introducing more recycling policies and this initiative helps everyone to move in that direction. "

"Batteries are one of the few product lines which traditionally have slipped through the recycling net. With this initiative and the involvement of KMK Metals Recycling locally, we are confident that the people of Tullamore will set the example for the entire country by actively bringing old batteries to local retail outlets which have deposit boxes", said Leo Donovan, CEO of WEEE Ireland, who also welcomed the involvement of the Tullamore Town Council and Chamber of Commerce in supporting the initiative:

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About WEEE Ireland

WEEE Ireland is the largest of two authorised national compliance schemes for electrical recycling. The scheme was founded in 2005 by producers of electrical and electronic appliances to comply with the WEEE Directive. WEEE Ireland organises the processing and recycling of household waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) on behalf of its members from recycling centres, electrical retailers and other collection points covering over 80% of the geographic area of the Republic of Ireland.

Any household item that requires a plug or battery to function and is at the end of its life is considered waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE). Such items can be deposited at any of 79 civic amenity sites nationwide for free recycling. Location details and opening hours of recycling centres throughout the country are available at: **www.weeeireland.ie** In addition, consumers can take back old electrical items to electrical retail shops when equivalent items are being purchased or bring their WEEE to one of the many public collection events WEEE Ireland runs throughout the country which are advertised in local press and radio.

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