



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Daylight Savings Time: Change Smoke Detector Batteries – And Recycle Them**

*Californians Must Keep All Universal Waste, Including Batteries,  
Out of Household Trash*

**San Diego, CA**– Daylight Savings Time begins this Sunday, March 9, and at the same time people engage in the ritual of changing their clocks, many also follow the recommendation to change the batteries in their smoke detectors.

But what should you do with those old batteries? In California, placing batteries and other “universal waste” into household trash is prohibited. Therefore, Waste Management reminds residents to be sure to recycle them.

“With the rapid changes and developments in technology, there are more and more devices around our homes that require batteries– including life-critical devices such as smoke detectors that require a regular battery changes to ensure they are working properly,” said Carl Scherbaum, District Manager, Waste Management of San Diego.

To power high-tech tools and toys, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that Americans purchase nearly three billion dry-cell batteries every year for radios, toys, flashlights, cellular phones, watches, laptop computers and portable power tools. In addition, the EPA estimates that on average, each American discards eight dry-cell batteries per year. Dry-cell batteries include alkaline batteries such as AAA, AA, C, D and 9V. In the recycling process, these batteries are shredded and case metals are separated. Not included in this category are car batteries, which need to be disposed of at your local household hazardous waste disposal facility.

“In California, it’s prohibited to dispose of batteries in household trash,” Scherbaum said. “Recycling batteries keeps heavy metals out of landfills and the air. It also saves resources because recovered plastic and metals can be used to make new batteries. They’re a great source of recyclable metal.”

A battery’s components are simple yet powerful. Inside a battery, heavy metals react with chemical electrolyte to produce the battery’s power. The dry cell battery chemistry types are: alkaline, zinc carbon, nickel metal hydride, nickel cadmium, lithium ion, lithium, mercury, silver and lead acid.

“Lead acid batteries are 100 percent recyclable,” said Scherbaum. “In fact, lead is the most recycled metal in the world today. The plastic containers and covers of old batteries are neutralized, reground and used to create new battery cases.”

*From Everyday Collection to Environmental Protection, Think Green, Think Waste Management*

Waste Management offers the following tips for recycling your batteries:

- Keep a plastic bucket in your home where your family can discard used batteries. Once the container fills up, take it to a recycling center or retailer in your community that can safely recycle the batteries.
- Start a neighborhood battery collection to help keep the batteries out of the trash and cut down on the number of trips each home has to make to a recycling center or retailer to return the used batteries.
- Set up a collection center at your workplace where employees can drop their used batteries and rotate among co-workers to take the batteries to be recycled.
- Waste Management's recycling center at 925 O'Conner St. in El Cajon (located just southwest of the intersection of Bradley Ave. and Johnson Ave.) accepts household batteries for drop-off. Hours are Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Note: Car batteries are considered household hazardous waste (HHW) and need to be taken to a HHW center. For more information, visit <http://www.wastemanagementsd.com/HHW.asp> or for Waste Management residential customers, contact customer service at 1(800) DUMPSTER or (619) 596-5100 to make an appointment for HHW drop-off.

For more information, visit <http://www.wastemanagementsd.com>.

*Waste Management, based in Houston, Texas, is the leading provider of comprehensive waste management services in North America. Our subsidiaries provide collection, transfer, recycling and resource recovery, and disposal services. We are also a leading developer, operator and owner of waste-to-energy and landfill gas-to-energy facilities in the United States. Our customers include residential, commercial, industrial, and municipal customers throughout North America.*

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