

Be Nice To Your Device

Your personal action guide

Simple solutions for battery safety and sustainability



From cell phones and laptops to electric cars and renewable energy storage, lithium-ion batteries power our lives. Li-ion batteries also hold enormous potential for a fossil-free future. To achieve this potential, Li-ion batteries and Li-ion powered devices need to be used responsibly and recycled safely.

Solving environmental and safety risks associated with producing, transporting, and disposing of Li-ion batteries will require changes in policy and business practices. But with so many Li-ion powered technologies right at our fingertips and simple, free solutions in our homes and communities, our personal actions can help significantly too.

The following are some places to start:

YOUR HOME & DEVICES

- **Resist buying a new device until you really need it.** The quickest way to reduce risks associated with improper device disposal is to limit the amount of electronic waste you create. Hang on to your device as long as it's in working condition.
- **Boost your device's battery lifespan** by keeping it between 20% and 80% charged. This will extend your battery life significantly.
- **Take advantage of cell phone trade-in programs.** When it's time to say goodbye to your phone, many carriers offer free trade-in services. Your phone will be donated, resold, or repurposed.
- **Have a device you no longer use? Drop it off at a safe recycling center that accepts Li-ion batteries and devices.**
Give your device a second chance at life by safely recycling it. The recycler will recover and repurpose pieces and raw materials for reuse—a great outcome for both people and the planet! Most people live within 10 miles of a Li-ion drop-off site. Find the site nearest you at call2recycle.org/locator.
- **Go on a Li-ion battery scavenger hunt!**
Many of our household items and day-to-day gadgets are powered by Li-ion batteries. From electric toothbrushes to children's toys, the opportunities to use or recycle these devices right within your home may seem nearly endless! Have kids? Make it a game. Go on a hunt around your home and take pictures of Li-ion items. Make plans for how you'll care for them to extend their lifespan or recycle them when they're no longer needed. You can find a printable scavenger hunt guide at BeNiceToYourDevice.org.
- **Purchase a safe battery recycling box.**
If you've rounded up a bunch of old batteries and devices, consider purchasing a battery recycling box (that includes two-way shipping to a safe recycling center!) at call2recycle.org/store. Made out of heavily tested flame-retardant materials, you can safely collect cell phones and rechargeable batteries for shipment to a recycling center. Single-use (alkaline) batteries can also be recycled using Call2Recycle battery recycling boxes. While single-use batteries do not pose the same fire risks as rechargeable Li-ion batteries, it can be difficult to find recycling drop-off locations that accept single-use batteries. Shipping may be the quickest and simplest solution.

Did you know? Most people live within 10 miles of a safe battery recycling center that accepts Li-ion batteries and devices.

Visit call2recycle.org/locator to find your nearest drop-off location.



YOUR COMMUNITY

- **Spread the word with your friends and neighbors!** Why don't people do more to safely recycle their devices? The simple, most common answer is lack of awareness. Many people **don't realize just how easy it is to safely recycle their devices**. Device trade-in programs are free and widely available. Most people in the U.S. live within 10 miles of a recycling drop-off site, where Li-ion batteries and devices can be dropped off and safely recycled for free. Safe packing and shipping materials can be easily purchased to recycle used batteries, larger batteries (i.e., from hoverboards, electronic bikes, or scooters), or batteries in bulk for schools, businesses, or anyone who has lots of devices to recycle! Helping your friends and neighbors understand just how easy it is to safely recycle rechargeable batteries and devices at the end of their lifespan can make a significant difference in how many people will follow through.
- It's also easy to get excited about purchasing new devices when your carrier launches the latest models of cell phones, laptops, tablets, or smart watches. This is particularly true when folks **aren't aware of the risks of short-lived devices or rewards of sustaining their lifespan** (and when their lifespan is truly over, responsibly recycling them). Most people want to do the right thing for a safer, more sustainable future. A little knowledge and encouragement from you may be all it takes!
- **Buddy up and work together.** Wish you could do more to rally others behind reducing e-waste? Don't do it alone! Buddy up with some friends and take a look around your community. Are there any colleges, organizations, agencies, or local groups tackling e-waste or related issues? Are there volunteer opportunities or platforms for larger community outreach? Who in your community would have a stake in reducing e-waste and increasing safe rechargeable battery recycling? Spend some time getting clear on what's already happening in your local area, how you might hop on board, and what other opportunities exist to think and work together to address these issues.
- **Reach your online community.** From memes and gifs to filters and sound bites, the world of social media opens plenty of doors for your message to be both educational and entertaining. Use your voice—whether it's silly, sarcastic, sentimental, or anything in between—to reach your online audience. Maybe you document what you're doing around your house to be nice to your devices. Maybe you imagine you're a drained battery, you're fearing your fate in the trash can and dreaming of the pearly gates of a safe recycling center. Whatever approach you take, be sure to tag @ElectrochemicalSafetyResearchInstitute (ESRI) and use #BeNiceToYourDevice, and we'll help you get the word out!





YOUR POLICYMAKERS

- **Write to your elected officials.**
Find out more about your elected officials and who might be interested in taking on issues around e-waste and safe battery recycling. Letters are an extremely impactful way of communicating with your elected officials, who will see your position as representative of many other potential voters who did not take the time to write. A quick Google search will offer loads of tips and resources for writing an effective letter.
- **Get involved in policy campaigns.**
If you're interested in shaping policy and business practices, you could also consider working with other members of your community on a policy campaign. The United Nations (UN) predicts that electronic waste will be the next great global challenge we face and has launched efforts worldwide to address related issues through its Sustainable Development Goals. Chances are good that elected officials in your state are thinking about how to address these goals through policy and practice. This is a long-term game, of course, but one of the most effective ways to ensure that safety and sustainability issues are addressed at all levels—and all stages of the supply chain—is in the development, use, and disposal of electronic devices and rechargeable batteries.

Take our advice: Be nice to your device and keep it out of the trash. Recycle rechargeable batteries and devices for a more sustainable world.

Visit [BeNiceToYourDevice.org](https://www.BeNiceToYourDevice.org) for simple and safe recycling solutions.

