

City of Long Beach
 Many Unique Neighborhoods
 One Great City

Dr. Suja Lowenthal
 Councilmember



Memorandum

To: Mayor and City Council

May 7, 2013

From: Suja Lowenthal, Second District
 Patrick O'Donnell, Fourth District
 James Johnson, Seventh District
 Al Austin, Eighth District

Subject: Residential Household Hazardous Waste Collection

REQUESTED ACTION:

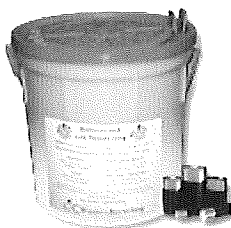
Request the City Manager investigate the development of a household battery and light bulb collection system to assist residents who wish to bring used batteries (dry cell, rechargeable, button cell) and light bulbs to the newly opened Household Hazardous Waste Center.

Request that City departments be provided with the necessary receptacles to safely dispose of household hazardous waste and evaluate whether city facilities such as libraries or park community centers offer a suitable location for a pilot residential collection program.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Recently, Long Beach celebrated the opening of its own regional Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) center to dispose of batteries, paint cans, light bulbs, sharps and other products. This permanent facility located in Signal Hill is the result of a partnership between Long Beach Environmental Services Bureau, Los Angeles County Public Works, Los Angeles County Sanitation District, and EDCO. Funding for the facility and equipment came from a CalRecycle Department grant.

Under the California Universal Waste Rule, household batteries cannot be thrown away because they contain toxic metals such as mercury, lead, cadmium, and nickel, which can harm our environment and poison our food chain, causing serious health risks to humans and animals. Household batteries include rechargeable nickel-cadmium batteries, silver button batteries, mercury batteries and alkaline batteries.



An example of a residential collection system can be found in Orange County, where residents may pick up a small plastic bucket the size of a paint can from any of the county Hazardous Waste Collection Centers. According to staff at OC Waste and Recycling, they have found that "when people have the infrastructure in their home to immediately separate out that waste.... then they are really on their way to helping our environment."

When the bucket is full or when residents have household hazardous, universal or electronic wastes to get rid of, they simply bring their battery bucket with them to the hazardous waste center for disposal and return. This is a simple, but effective way to encourage proper disposal of our most common household hazardous waste while providing our Environmental Services Bureau with another tool for public education and promotion of city services.

The County of Los Angeles maintains a household battery collection pilot program at their public libraries. This program offers battery collection containers at designated libraries throughout the County. The idea of using libraries as a free and convenient outlet to dispose of common household batteries is appealing since so many youth use our libraries and a great deal of batteries needing to be disposed come from their electronic toys. In addition, there is a great educational element.



The City's Environmental Services Bureau maintains a website (www.longbeach-recycles.org/hhw/proper_disposal.htm#hhw) for locations besides the newly opened HHW Center, where residents can dispose of hazardous waste, e-waste, universal waste, fluorescent bulbs and sharps.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There would be a fiscal impact to purchase and brand containers and bags, so we would ask the City Manager to investigate whether there are hazardous waste, recycling or refuse funds available to support a related element to their program.