

Providing for responsible environmental management of batteries

SB 5144 Senator Derek Stanford

Why does Washington Need Extended Producer Responsibility for Batteries?

The problem: Lack of widespread battery collection leads to waste and hazards

Even though an increasing number of consumer products contain batteries, Washingtonians don't have a good way to recycle them. Batteries can be dangerous to people and the environment when they are not stored or disposed of properly. Lithium-ion batteries can ignite and cause serious fires if they are improperly stored or transported. This is why airlines do not allow people to check li-ion batteries with their luggage. Similarly, when batteries end up in the trash or recycling bins, they can cause fires in garbage trucks and at transfer stations. These fires and smoke are hazardous to workers, first responders, and communities nearby.

Furthermore, **batteries should not end up in landfills** because they contain valuable materials which should be recovered and used to make new batteries or other products. When landfilled, batteries can leak toxic substances and contaminate the environment. Without an accessible system for returning used batteries to be recycled, Washington will continue to see an increase in dangerous battery-related incidents and environmental harm.

The solution: Hold battery producers responsible for managing battery collection and recycling

An extended producer responsibility program for batteries would:

- **Shift costs to manufacturers:** Require battery manufacturers to manage and pay for the collection, transport, and recycling of single use and rechargeable batteries
- **Make recycling batteries easy:** Establish battery recycling drop off locations that are accessible for all Washingtonians
- **Ban batteries from the trash**

WHAT IS BATTERY PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP?

A battery stewardship program ensures manufacturers are responsible for the lifecycle of batteries, from design to disposal.

9 STATES have enacted battery stewardship laws

Benefits to Washingtonians and the environment



- Makes recycling batteries convenient, accessible, and free
- Increases the number of batteries recycled, saving valuable materials from being sent to the landfill
- Decreases environmental pollution caused by fires and toxic leakage across the state
- Encourages manufacturers to improve battery design
- Protects recycling and garbage trucks, transfer stations and contracted facilities, *and workers* from battery-caused fires
- Reimburses local governments for serving as collection sites and associated labor costs