

Recycling Update:

New program to focus on Fluorescent lamps/batteries

Mercury

Mercury is an essential ingredient for most energy-efficient lamps. Using fluorescent lamps makes business and environmental sense because they consume one quarter as much electricity as incandescent lighting.

~

At the same time, spent and broken fluorescent lamps need to be handled very carefully because the phosphor powder inside them contains mercury. Standard linear fluorescents, lamps with green end caps or green marking, compact fluorescents, and high intensity discharge (HID) and high-pressure sodium lamps used in outdoor lighting all contain mercury.

~

Mercury is toxic to the nervous system, kidneys, liver, and immune system. When lamps are taken out of service for disposal they are considered a hazardous waste.

Fluorescent lamp/battery recycling

In addition to electronics, Elk County will now be recycling fluorescent lamps and many different types of batteries. These items will be recycled at the electronics recycling center in St. Marys. The center is open the third Saturday of each month from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m.



The service will be free to residents and businesses will be charged a small fee to cover costs.

Residential recycling

Fluorescent lamps are considered Household Hazardous Waste. Although there is nothing in state or federal law to require they be recycled, they do contain mercury and because mercury is such a persistent toxin we encourage residents to take part in the program.

Business recycling

Fluorescent lamps are considered a Universal Waste. Most states along with EPA have adopted Universal Waste Regulations for the disposal of lamps. These regulations allow lamps to be sent using common carriers without the need of a Hazardous Waste Manifest. This keeps the cost of transportation low and thus encourages the recycling of the lamps. Some aspects of the RCRA and Universal Waste regulations allow for "Conditionally Exempt Small-Quantity Generators" to become exempt for certain aspects of the regulations. None of these exemptions allow for improper lamp disposal. The county is encouraging its business community to participate in the program if it doesn't already contract with a recycling firm.

Proper handling of fluorescent lamps

- ✓ Place waste bulbs in the box in which replacement tubes or bulbs arrived.
- ✓ Do not tape together
- ✓ Be very careful not to break fluorescent lamps. Broken lamps must be handled as hazardous waste.

Lamps accepted for recycling

IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, PLEASE BRING BULBS IN ORIGINAL CARTONS. SHIPPING CARTONS FOR THESE MATERIALS ARE EXPENSIVE. IF A BUSINESS HAS A VERY LARGE QUANTITY OF BULBS, WE CAN MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR A DIRECT PICKUP.

All fluorescent lamps, straight lengths, circular and U-tubes, compacts

HID/Sodium Vapor/Metal Halide: HID lamps contain mercury, cadmium and antimony, Sodium Vapor lamps contain mercury, cadmium and chromium, and Mercury Vapor lamps contain mercury, cadmium, and antimony

Mercury vapor bulbs are the original high-intensity discharge (HID) lamps with blue-white light, originally used as farmyard lights.

Metal halide bulbs are newer, more efficient HID lights found in homes and businesses.

High-pressure sodium-vapor bulbs are white-yellow HID lights used for street lamps and outdoor security lighting.

Low-pressure sodium vapor bulbs are orange HID lights used primarily in commercial settings.

Business Pricing:

**HID/Sodium Vapor/
Metal Halide:** 60 cents each

4-foot fluorescent: 38 cents each

8-foot fluorescent: 70 cents each

Circular/U-Tubes: 50 cents each

Batteries accepted for recycling

The following batteries will be accepted at the center. The service is free to residents. Businesses will be charged the listed per-pound price.

Alkaline (75 cents per pound)

Nickel Cadmium (NiCd) (75 cents per pound)

Mercury (\$3.50 per pound)

Zinc Air (\$3.50 per pound)

Lithium (\$5.00 per pound)

Lithium Ion (\$2.40 per pound)

Button cells: silver, mercury, zinc air (\$3.45 per pound)

Lead-acid (AAA-D) (50 cents per pound)

Lead-acid (wet – we will not accept car batteries) (14 cents per pound)

Carbon Air (75 cents per pound)

Carbon Air with Mercury (\$3.95 per pound)

Post-script.....

Volunteers are always needed for the electronics center. The center is open the third Saturday of every month from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. If you would like to volunteer please call the recycling office at 776-5373

The electronics, fluorescent lamp and battery recycling programs are funded, in part, by a grant from the Department of Environmental Protection.