**PRESS RELEASE**

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**DEC Ensures Safe Battery Collection and Recycling at Transfer Stations**

*Montpelier, Vt.* – In the past year, several battery fires have occurred at transfer stations throughout the Northeast. The [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports](https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2021-08/lithium-ion-battery-report-update-7.01_508.pdf) that lithium-ion batteries caused over 240 fires at 64 facilities between 2013 and 2020. Common sources included consumer devices like cell phones, tablets, laptops, hoverboards, and e-cigarettes.

To help solid waste and recycling workers safely collect batteries and reduce the risk of fires, the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Solid Waste Program has spent $160,000 to purchase and distribute battery collection safety kits to over 160 public and private transfer stations and Household Hazardous Waste facilities. The kits include fire shield blankets, gloves, and packaging to handle and mail back damaged or defective batteries for recycling.

“With the growth of batteries, it is important that both consumers and solid waste managers have the tools to safely and effectively handle them before they pose a fire risk,” says DEC Commissioner John Beling. “Our department has partnered with Call2Recycle, to help get safe battery collection and recycling supplies in place as waste materials continue to change.”

DEC is also providing battery safety training in partnership with [Call2Recycle](http://www.call2recycle.org), which operates the [Vermont battery recycling program](https://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management/solid/materials-mgmt/product-stewardship/primary-batteries) on behalf of battery and product manufacturers.

Consumers are encouraged to safely recycle their leftover single-use and rechargeable batteries at one of [150 battery recycling collection locations](https://www.call2recycle.org/vermont/) in Vermont. If a consumer has a bulging or damaged battery, they should immediately contact their local [solid waste management entity](https://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management/solid/local-districts) to get the damaged battery to a facility that can store and recycle it safely.

“Lithium and lithium-ion batteries are important technology for modern life but must be stored and handled properly to prevent damage,” said Mia Roethlein with the DEC Solid Waste Program. “By collecting these batteries for special recycling, we can protect the environment and human health and capture valuable natural resources.”

To learn more about battery recycling, go to [call2recycle.org/vermont](https://www.call2recycle.org/vermont/). For questions on special battery recycling or other household or business waste, please contact the DEC Solid Waste Program at [vtrecycles.com](https://dec.vermont.gov/waste-management/solid?utm_medium=301&utm_source=vtrecycles.com) or call Mia Roethlein at 802-522-5926 or Josh Kelly at 802-522-5897.

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*The Department of Environmental Conservation is responsible for protecting Vermont's natural resources and safeguarding human health for the benefit of this and future generations. Visit* [*dec.vermont.gov*](https://dec.vermont.gov/) *and follow the Department of Environmental Conservation on* [*Facebook*](https://www.facebook.com/TheVermontDEC/) *and* [*Instagram*](https://www.instagram.com/thevermontdec/)*.*

Read the [press release online](https://dec.vermont.gov/news/dec-ensures-safe-battery-collection-and-recycling-transfer-stations).