

For Release: IMMEDIATE
Monday, December 5, 2011

Contact: Lisa King
(518) 402-8000

DEC: BAN ON DISPOSING RECHARGEABLE BATTERIES IN NYS GOES INTO EFFECT TODAY

A provision in the New York State Rechargeable Battery Recycling Act prohibiting disposal of most rechargeable batteries as a solid waste in the state starts today, announced the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. The new provision of the law gives consumers the opportunity to drop off rechargeable batteries at local retail stores. The law already requires battery manufacturers to provide for collection and recycling of rechargeable batteries in a statewide program at no cost to consumers.

“Since many rechargeable batteries contain toxic metals that can be released into the environment when managed improperly, this program is a good example of product stewardship among consumers, retailers and battery manufacturers,” DEC Commissioner Joe Martens said. “Valuable metals from rechargeable batteries can be recovered for reuse instead of ending up in the trash.”

Most retailers that sell rechargeable batteries are required to accept used ones from individuals during normal business hours. The law requires battery collection by both local retailers and direct sellers of rechargeable batteries (i.e., catalog, telephone, or internet sales). Retailers must also post signs alerting consumers about the disposal ban and the opportunities to return rechargeable batteries at their location.

Rechargeable batteries covered by this law include; nickel cadmium, sealed lead, lithium ion, nickel metal hydride and any other dry cell rechargeable batteries weighing less than 25 pounds. This law does not cover vehicle batteries or non-rechargeable batteries such as common alkaline batteries. Rechargeable batteries from cordless power tools, laptops, telephones, cameras and other electronic devices are among a growing list of products New Yorkers can return to retailers for recycling at the end of its useful life.

The [NYS Rechargeable Battery Recycling Act](#) was signed into law on December 10, 2010. DEC is anticipating cooperation among consumers, retailers and manufacturers for a successful implementation of the law. However, any retailer who violates the law would be liable for a civil penalty of \$200 for the first violation, \$400 for a second violation within 12 months and \$500 for a third or subsequent violation within 12 months. Any battery manufacturer who violates the law would be liable for a civil penalty of \$2,000 for the first violation, \$4,000 for a second violation within a 12 month period, and \$5,000 for a third or subsequent violation within 12 months.

For more information on the New York State Rechargeable Battery Recycling Act, visit DEC’s Web site at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/72065.html>.

###