

Proper Disposal of Hearing Aid Batteries

Did you know that hearing aid batteries contain hazardous materials? Most small, round "button cell" type batteries contain mercury, silver, cadmium, lithium or other heavy metals as their main component. These materials leak in landfills, can enter the water table, and are even worse when incinerated.

The life of your battery depends on your model of hearing aid, the hours of uninterrupted use, the volume setting you use, and even the background noises your exposed to. Batteries typically will last two weeks and may last up to four weeks. Store your batteries in a cool and dry place, but don't store them in your refrigerator or freezer. Warming the batteries to room temperature may cause condensation and corrosion and does not prolong their life span. Do not carry loose batteries in your purse or pocket. Metal objects can prematurely discharge the batteries.

Before inserting the battery into your hearing aid, the battery should be dry and at room temperature. Check for corrosion that looks like white dust, if you see this dust, do not attempt to clean the battery and use it anyway because damage to your hearing aid can result. When your hearing aid is not in use, remove the battery, or at least open the battery door. This will help to reduce corrosion. Make sure you pay extra attention to keep batteries away from pets and children. Seek medical help if a battery is swallowed. Cases have been reported where young children have required surgery to remove a swallowed battery because it can corrode through an intestine.

Dispose of used batteries properly; do not throw batteries into a fire. Place spent batteries in a zip lock bag and save for our household hazardous waste Cleansweep events which occur twice a year for both Washburn and Burnett counties. Disposal of these batteries is free to county residents so there is no reason for improper disposal! If you have any questions about recycling, or cannot wait until summer to dispose of the batteries please call Jen at the Recycling Control Commission 715-635-2197.