

## Call2Recycle and New Jersey Coalition Take on Battery Recycling Initiative to Help Residents “Avoid the Spark”

*Education campaign aims to reduce battery-ignited fire danger by helping residents identify & recycle household batteries*

TRENTON, N.J. - August 24, 2021 - Call2Recycle, the United States' leading consumer battery stewardship and recycling program, today announced a partnership with the [Association of New Jersey Recyclers](#) (ANJR), the [Association of New Jersey Household Hazardous Waste Coordinators](#) (ANJHHWC), and [Recycle Coach](#) to increase awareness around safe handling of consumer batteries. The initiative, “[Avoid the Spark: Be Battery Safety Smart](#),” comes as New Jersey recyclers and waste facilities are experiencing a rising number of fire events that may be due to improper disposal of batteries, putting lives and property in danger.

“The freedom that comes with a wireless world is not without its dangers. It’s critical that residents understand what they can safely throw in the recycling bin and what may require special handling,” said **Linda Gabor, Call2Recycle’s executive vice president of external relations**. “Our partnership with ANJR, ANJHHWC, and local officials serves as a clarion call for New Jersey: avoiding the spark protects lives, property, and the planet. Our job is to make the steps to proper battery disposal as seamless as possible.”

The announcement comes after a concerning year for battery fires in New Jersey, with one report listing six potential battery-ignited fires at waste and recycling facilities in New Jersey over the course of 2020. But facilities aren’t the only venues — batteries can spark in transit as well, as happened in an Atlantic County garbage truck fire last November. The damage from these fires is often severe; Newark’s Giordano Companies faced a likely-battery-ignited [fire at one of its recycling facilities](#) last July that injured two firefighters and destroyed one of its sorting systems, while Atlantic Coast Fibers [suffered a complete loss](#) of a facility in Passaic this January.

While many batteries can pose environmental hazards if improperly handled, rechargeable batteries -- like the ones that power our phones, laptops, power tools, and other portable devices -- can cause dangerous fires when disposed of incorrectly. These batteries can contain a residual charge that can spark when they come into contact with other metals, putting frontline waste workers and local communities in danger. For residents, just knowing about the hidden dangers of improper battery handling can dramatically cut down on safety incidents.

Through a series of straightforward and easy-to-read educational materials, Avoid The Spark New Jersey will help local residents [properly identify](#) common types of household batteries; the disposal procedures for each type; and directions on where they can safely and conveniently recycle their batteries using the [Call2Recycle locator tool](#) and the [Recycle Coach](#) app.

Call2Recycle has a network of battery drop-off sites across New Jersey, with nearly 380 active collection sites. New Jersey residents have recycled nearly 3.2 million pounds of batteries through Call2Recycle since its inception, and today, approximately 98% of state residents live within 10 miles of a Call2Recycle battery collection site. Despite this, battery recycling in the state dropped significantly this year, from 110,000 pounds in 2020 to 62,400 pounds of batteries recycled in 2021.

“Fire risk from improperly disposed batteries are one of the biggest threats our dedicated recyclers face every day, and we’re committed to making their jobs safer at every turn. Working with Call2Recycle, we have significant resources and expertise to draw on as we work towards making it easier than ever for households to do their part in keeping their communities safe,” said **ANJR President Angela Andersen**.

“Every step towards a cleaner, safer waste stream is a win for the members we represent and the communities they serve. Battery-related fires are a problem we need to tackle before they start. These critical education materials and resources will be instrumental in teaching households to Avoid the Spark once and for all,” said **ANJHHWC President Jaye Sims**.

**About Call2Recycle, Inc.**

*Call2Recycle, Inc. is committed to protecting and preserving the environment through responsible end-of-life management of consumer batteries, cellphones, and related products. Founded in 1994, the not-for-profit organization works on behalf of stakeholders to provide its consumer battery recycling program to consumers across the U.S. Visit [call2recycle.org](http://call2recycle.org) or follow us on Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn.*

**About the Association of New Jersey Recyclers (ANJR)**

*The mission of the Association of New Jersey Recyclers (ANJR) is to support, promote and enhance source reduction, reuse practices, organics management, and recycling activities in the State of New Jersey. ANJR provides educational and training programs, and also advances policies that support sustainable materials management, which in turn benefits the environment, the communities and the economy of New Jersey. The Association of New Jersey Recyclers (ANJR) is a not-for-profit, 501(c) (3), nonpartisan network that was incorporated in 1984. ANJR’s members consist of individuals and organizations from both the public and private sectors, governmental entities, the recycling industry, and the business community. Visit [anjr.com](http://anjr.com).*

**About The Association of New Jersey Household Hazardous Waste Coordinators (“ANJHHWC”)**

*The Association of New Jersey Household Hazardous Waste Coordinators (“ANJHHWC”) is a professional organization of public and private sector individuals involved in household hazardous waste (“HHW”) management and related programs in the State of New Jersey. The individuals of the group work together to educate each other and to improve everyone’s individual programs. Visit [www.njhazwaste.com](http://www.njhazwaste.com).*

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