What are the regulatory requirements?

Households must recycle their lead acid batteries but are exempt from the hazardous waste requirements (see KRS 224). Businesses who generate lead acid batteries have the option of handling them either as a Universal Waste under 401 KAR Chapter 43 or as a hazardous waste under 401 KAR Chapter 32 and 401 KAR Chapter 36:070.

Under the Universal Waste Regulations a generator may accumulate up to 11,000 pounds of waste on-site before shipping, making it more economically feasible for transportation. A hazardous waste manifest is not required for shipping universal waste, however, packages must be properly labeled.

Companies that dismantle or break apart and recover lead values from spent lead acid batteries, must obtain a hazardous waste permit as a Lead Acid Battery Recycler as per 401 KAR 36:070.

Kentucky Administrative Regulations and
Kentucky Revised Statutes may be found on the Internet
at www.lrc.state.ky.us/home.htm

Where can I get help?

Division of Waste Management
Hazardous Waste Branch
200 Fair Oaks
Frankfort KY 40601
(502) 564-6716
www.waste.ky.gov

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Cabinet does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services. The Cabinet provides, upon request, reasonable accommodations including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in all programs and activities. To request this publication in an alternate format, contact the Division of Waste Management (502) 564-6716. Publication of this notice is pursuant to KRS 224.40-310.

LEAD ACID BATTERIES

Prepared by:
Division of Waste Management
Hazardous Waste Branch
200 Fair Oaks.
Frankfort KY 40601
(502) 564-6716

What is a lead acid battery?

Lead acid batteries supply power to motor vehicles, heavy equipment and emergency lights. These batteries range in size and have a capacity of six volts or more. They contain hazardous material (lead and acid).

Did you know…?

The battery, invented in 1859, was first used to keep the lights on in railroad cars stopped at train stations.

A typical lead battery weighs 36 pounds and contains approximately 18 pounds of lead, 1 gallon of sulfuric acid and 3 pounds of plastic.

Lead acid batteries used in automobiles, trucks and boats have a high level of toxic and highly corrosive sulfuric acid. The lead from these batteries can be recovered through smelting.

Almost 20% of all U.S. homes store at least one old automotive-type battery, amounting to 30-40 million used lead batteries in storage.

Lead acid batteries are accepted at most automotive centers. Retailers commonly give rebates on old batteries when customers buy new ones.

It is illegal to dispose of lead acid batteries in a landfill.

What should I do with my old battery?

Handling and storage:

- Storing indoors is preferable to avoid extreme temperature changes that could cause the battery to burst and leak.
- Avoid stockpiling batteries, store in a single layer.
- Store batteries upright to protect against acid leaks through vent holes
- Wear safety equipment (gloves, aprons, glasses, etc.)
- Keep supplies such as gloves, plastic bags, rags or disposable wipes and absorbent for spills near or in the storage area.
- Replace missing caps immediately
- Double-bag damaged batteries in sturdy plastic tubs or plastic bags at least 6 mm in thickness.
- Small acid spills should be contained and can be neutralized using lime or bicarbonate soda but all residue must be contained and disposed of properly.

Batteries must be shipped in accordance with federal Department of Transportation regulations including labeling, and completion of the bill-of-lading.

Lead is a naturally occurring metal which finds its way into the environment in a variety of ways. It can enter the environment as a result of natural processes such as weathering of the earth's surface, or volcanic activity. It also enters the environment as a result of human activities such as the deterioration of lead-based paint, burning of leaded gas in vehicles, industrial emissions and the disposal of various wastes. Lead cannot be degraded or transformed into some other material and is extremely difficult to clean up after dispersal.

Short-term exposure to lead can make you seriously ill. Long-term overexposure can cause numerous health problems, such as anemia, damage to your nervous system and brain, kidney disease and reproductive impairments. Lead is also the greatest threat to children causing reading disorders, attention deficits, psychological disturbances and mental retardation, even kidney disease and gouty arthritis.