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Battery Recycling Corp. will accept old cell phones

By Terri Thomas, Guest writer
January 2, 2005

In 2005, roughly 200 million cell phones will be in use in the United States, and about 130 million phones will be retired each year, according to INFORM Inc., a research organization that examines the effects of business practices on the environment and human health.

A survey conducted by the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corp. revealed that an American adult on average owns more than two cell phones. More than 70 percent of respondents, however, did not know that cell phones are recyclable, although nearly 90 percent indicated they would recycle them if provided with convenient drop-off points.

The Battery Recycling Corp.'s Call2Recycle, the first nationwide cell phone and rechargeable battery recycling program, aims to make it convenient for cell phone users. Call2Recycle features more than 30,000 collection locations across the nation where consumers can drop off old cell phones, whether they are in working condition or not.

The rechargeable batteries in the phones will be recycled, and the cell phones themselves will be refurbished, recycled or resold when possible by ReCellular Inc., with a portion of the proceeds to be donated to national charities.

The Battery Recycling Corp. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to rechargeable battery recycling. More than 30,000 retail and community battery collection locations throughout the United States and Canada participate in its battery recycling program. The organization is funded by more than 300 manufacturers and marketers of portable rechargeable batteries and products.

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Nickel cadmium, nickel metal hydride, lithium ion and small sealed lead batteries all can be recycled. Look for the Battery Recycling Seal on the battery. The reclaimed materials can be used in new products.

Rechargeable batteries are commonly found in cordless power tools, cellular and cordless phones, laptop computers, digital cameras, two-way radios, camcorders and remote-control toys. Buying rechargeable AA, C and D cells can be a good investment.

If you factor the cost of disposable alkaline batteries over the service life of rechargeable ones, the cost for disposables is almost 1,000 times higher. Also, don't forget pollution in landfills from disposable batteries.

Rechargeable nickel cadmium and nickel metal hydride batteries, however, aren't suited for every use, and rechargeable batteries should never be used in smoke detectors.

For information on battery cost comparisons and how to choose the right battery, visit http://www.otherpower.com/otherpower_battery_small.html.

Consumers can find the nearest battery drop-off location by visiting <http://www.rbrc.org> or calling 1-800-8-BATTERY.

For cell phone recycling, visit <http://www.call2recycle.org> or call 1-877-2-RECYCLE.

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