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Friday Marked Start of New Local Campaign to Recycle Batteries

The kick-off event for a new battery recycling campaign was held at Digitech Camera Repair in Monrovia.

By [Alison Roeske](#) | [Email the author](#) | April 24, 2011



Will you be recycling batteries? [Tell us in the comments.](#)

The San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments and the California Product Stewardship Council launched a battery recycling campaign Thursday at [Digitech Camera Repair](#) in Monrovia, one of more than 30 businesses in the San Gabriel Valley that are participating in a new campaign funded by a grant from CalRecycle.

CalRecycle estimates that more than 500 million batteries are sold in California each year, but only 0.5 percent of them are recycled, according to the campaign.

"Many people don't know that in 2006 batteries were banned from landfills," said Monrovia Mayor Mary Ann Lutz, who is also the chair of the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments' (COG's) Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee.

"This is going to be a way to get the word out," Lutz said. "We're trying to give options that are easy and user friendly."

Also in attendance was Cynthia Kurtz, Executive Director of the San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership, who stressed that it was important to support the businesses that are participating in the recycling program. The campaign kicked off one day before Earth Day, which is celebrated around the world on April 22.

The program is the result of a \$400,000 grant from CalRecycle. Bekah Cooke, of COG's Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee, said they began working on proposal with the California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC), after CPSC Director Heidi Sanborn told them about the grant opportunity in 2008.

The grant went into effect in December of 2009, and the organizations began conducting focus group research in 2010. By January and February of 2011, interested merchants began receiving the battery recycling bins, which are also being provided by the battery manufacturers.

"It's a partnership of all the groups together," Sanborn said.

Sanborn said that they are currently promoting the program through press events, ads, and radio spots. The program will run through April of next year, and the results of it will also give them a good idea as to which locations are most convenient and where to promote battery recycling in the future.

John Berberian, who hosted the event at his store, Digitech Camera Repair, has already turned in one box of recycled batteries. His second battery-recycling bin is quickly filling up. A sticker on the storefront window advertises his business as a battery recycling location.

"It will save energy and at the same time it will produce less waste. It's a really good project and I really strongly believe in it. I use a lot of batteries myself too," Berberian said.

Monrovia's Army Navy Surplus store and [Dollmaker's Kattywompus](#) are also participating in the battery-recycling program. A complete list of participating merchants throughout the San Gabriel Valley is available at <http://sgvcog.org/index.cfm/Battery-Recycling-Pilot-Program.cfm>