



Household Battery Recycling Made Easier in California

Posted May 27, 2011

Thanks to a grant from the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle), the San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments (SGVCOG) is making it easier for consumers to recycle household batteries. Since 2006, the State of California has banned disposal of these types of batteries in the trash. The SGVCOG is creating a program for consumers to support proper battery recycling and management by providing convenient drop-off locations throughout the San Gabriel Valley.

In preparation for the launch of a pilot battery take-back program, SGVCOG conducted focus groups and phone survey research of San Gabriel Valley residents in 2010 that revealed more people would recycle household hazardous materials if recycling were more convenient. Research findings include:

Only 59 percent of those surveyed were aware of the battery disposal ban. 56 percent of respondents still dispose of batteries in the trash. Residents stated that they continued to dispose of batteries in the trash despite knowing about the disposal ban because recycling was so inconvenient.

Since the current system was clearly not working, the residents were surveyed on possible alternatives and 85 percent indicated that they are likely to participate in a retailer take-back program for used batteries and lamps, which led the SGVCOG to develop a take-back program. The SGVCOG pilot battery take-back program will provide convenient drop off locations for consumers in the San Gabriel Valley by partnering with local businesses to provide collection services. Participating businesses display an identifying sticker in their window and place a collection box, provided by SGVCOG, within their store where consumers can properly dispose of non-working batteries. This program is the first to collaborate with local retailers in the area and identify best practices that other local governments can implement. The collection sites range from grocery stores to camera shops throughout the San Gabriel Valley.

*For more information go to www.americanrecycler.com