



For immediate release:

Contacts:

Rachel Setzke, Sr. Policy Research Advisor, Eco-Cycle, rachel@ecocycle.org, 720-371-7602

Liz Chapman, Executive Director, Recycle Colorado, executive.director@recyclecolorado.org, 720-839-9531

Genevieve O'Sullivan, Senior Vice President and Chief of Communications, National Waste & Recycling Association, 202-731-1812

Colorado Governor Signs Groundbreaking Battery Recycling Law

New program will provide free statewide collection of loose batteries to recycle valuable minerals, prevent fires, and keep toxic waste out of landfills

Denver, CO — On June 4, Governor Jared Polis signed into law the Colorado Battery Stewardship Act (SB25-163) positioning Colorado as a national leader in battery recycling and fire prevention.

Batteries contain valuable materials like lithium, nickel, cobalt, and manganese—critical minerals that should be recovered to conserve energy, protect natural resources, and strengthen our economy. Yet Colorado currently recycles just 5% of loose small- and medium-format batteries, and improperly disposed-of batteries are a leading cause of fires in waste and recycling facilities.

Despite the environmental importance of recovering these materials—and the serious safety risks posed by improper disposal—many Coloradans still lack convenient access to safe, responsible battery recycling.

This new law changes that. Beginning in 2027, companies that sell small- and medium-format removable batteries in Colorado (including button batteries, cells AAA through D, and power tool and e-bike batteries) will be required to fund and implement a statewide collection and recycling program. The system will be managed by a producer-run Battery Stewardship Organization (BSO) and overseen by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). The BSO will reimburse service providers to safely collect, transport, and recycle batteries.

“This bill is a win for consumers, businesses, and the environment,” said Liz Chapman, Executive Director of Recycle Colorado. “By establishing a producer-funded collection system, we’re removing the financial burden from local governments while making battery recycling more accessible to all Coloradans.”

The new law sets bold benchmarks to expand access and improve safety statewide:

- By **2028**, at least one permanent drop-off site for small-format batteries will be available within 15 miles of 95% of Colorado residents.
- **At least one permanent site or annual collection event** will be held for every 30,000 county residents.
- By **2029**, there must be at least 15 permanent collection sites for medium-format batteries, with at least one in every county with 150,000 or more residents. The BSO must hold annual collection events in counties without permanent sites.
- **Consumers will not pay at the point of collection**, and participation by retailers, local governments, and recycling operators is voluntary.

The bill was supported by a diverse coalition of national and state recyclers, haulers, fire districts, and environmental justice advocates—including Recycle Colorado, Eco-Cycle, and the National Waste and Recycling Association—Rocky Mountain Chapter, South Metro Fire Rescue, Boulder County’s Household Hazardous Waste Program, and GreenLatinos.

State Senator Lisa Cutter, a prime sponsor of the bill, highlighted the safety benefits and need for shared responsibility.

“Improper battery disposal creates financial burdens and threatens the safety of residents, waste and recycling workers, and firefighters,” she said. “It can also pollute our soil and water with dangerous toxins. Consumers bear the brunt of our waste problem, and this legislation levels the playing field by requiring all producers to take responsibility for the batteries they sell.”

Supporters also emphasized the broader implications for materials management and local communities.

“The Battery Stewardship Act helps keep valuable materials in circulation while protecting our communities,” said Rachel Setzke, Senior Policy Advisor at Eco-Cycle.



"This collective effort to prioritize environmental safety and sustainability will shift the cost of battery collections from taxpayers to producers and will expand access to battery collection around the state," said Shelly Fuller, Boulder County's Hazardous Materials Program Manager.

Barrett Jensen of Waste Connections and Chair of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the National Waste and Recycling Association, underscored how the law supports industry and public safety. "This law addresses a critical safety issue for our workers and facilities while providing a sustainable solution. It's a model for how collaboration among stakeholders can solve complex challenges."

The Battery Stewardship Act is a practical, scalable solution that advances Colorado's environmental goals while protecting workers and communities. With Producer Responsibility at its core, the law ensures shared investment in a safer, more circular future.

###

***Eco-Cycle** is one of the oldest and largest nonprofit recyclers and Zero Waste organizations in the US. Eco-Cycle innovates, implements, and advocates for local and global Zero Waste solutions to foster a more regenerative, equitable and climate resilient future. For more information, visit ecocycle.org.*

***Recycle Colorado** is membership-based nonprofit, dedicated to transforming Colorado into a national leader in waste reduction, recovery, and diversion. For more information, visit www.recyclecolorado.org.*

***The National Waste & Recycling Association (NWRA)** represents the private sector waste and recycling services industry. Association members conduct business in all 50 states and include companies that manage solid, industrial/hazardous, medical, and construction/demolition debris waste, and represent equipment manufacturers and distributors, and a variety of other professional service providers. For more information about NWRA, please visit www.wasterecycling.org.*

