

Collection Site Spotlight
The Recycling Zone: Dakota County HHW
Laura Villa, Dakota County Environmental Resources

1). How long has Dakota County operated an HHW program and how much has it grown since inception?

Dakota County has operated a HHW facility with Gopher Resources since 1992, which operates a lead processing facility adjacent to the public recycling facility in Eagan. We operate a drop-off facility for residential consumers, which has grown from 2,000 customers in the first year to more than 69,000 in 2016.

2). Have you seen an increase in batteries over the years?

At Dakota County, we've always accepted batteries, but we did not start recycling alkaline/carbon zinc until 2014. The amount of batteries is increasing, I believe, due to a greater awareness of the environmental benefits of battery recycling and because we now take all battery types. As such, we're able to provide an eco-friendly and convenient service that removes the guess work from determining what battery types are accepted. Our goal is to be a battery recycling one-stop-shop for residents.

3). What tips/suggestions would you make regarding consumer education on bringing batteries to the Recycling Zone?

- Safety is critical when managing battery recycling efforts. We comply with Call2Recycle and all local and government safety standards to ensure the safety of our team members and the public.
- Be sure to safely prep and transport batteries to our location, keeping items to be recycled separate. For example, don't mix batteries and bulbs together in the same container. We've seen this issue frequently as batteries can break bulbs, creating a safety hazard.
- At the Recycling Zone, we offer all battery recycling. This means residents within and nearby Dakota County can declutter their homes/offices while also do something good for the planet by recycling their used batteries.
- Since the launch of the Call2Recycle partnership in 2003, Dakota County has recycled more than 27,000 pounds of alkaline/carbon zinc, lithium primary and button cell batteries along with rechargeable batteries.