



Media release

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Power tool battery recycling creates a buzz in Brisbane

The Power Tool Batteryback recycling pilot in Brisbane has collected almost **two tonnes** of batteries for recycling since its launch in September 2015. This represents a small but significant dent in the more than three million power tool batteries estimated to reach their end-of-life in Australia each year.

The Australian Battery Recycling Initiative (ABRI) is calling for more power tool batteries to be recycled through the program, which has been designed by ABRI to collect and recycle used power tool batteries, to gauge demand, and inform the structure of a future, permanent program that operates nationwide.

Power tool batteries are amongst the most hazardous batteries in the waste stream and often contain cadmium, a toxin and known carcinogen that must be kept out of landfill, and safely processed.

Research conducted so far shows that consumers want to recycle power tool batteries, but the biggest barrier, cited by 86% of respondents, is knowing where to recycle them.

Under the pilot program DIYers and tradespeople can deposit any brand of power tool battery into a specially marked bin at a participating hardware store in the Brisbane area, free of charge. Collection points are available at participating Bunnings, Masters, TradeTools and Total Tools stores. To find your nearest collection point visit <http://recyclingnearyou.com.au/powertools/>.

"It's an impressive achievement that almost two tonnes of potentially hazardous power tool batteries have been collected in just five months in one city," says Brad Gray, Head of Campaigns at Planet Ark, a member of ABRI. "Every battery sent for recycling is one that is diverted away from landfill and kept out of the environment."

Helen Lewis, Chief Executive of ABRI, thanked everyone who has been involved so far. "We encourage everyone else to check their shed or workshop for any old power tool batteries and make sure you recycle them before the pilot wraps up," she said.

By weight, the majority of batteries collected (70%) have been lithium-ion, followed by the highly toxic nickel cadmium (22%) and nickel metal hydride batteries (8%). These batteries will all be safely recycled to recover reusable materials and divert hazardous substances from landfill.

The most common brands collected to date have been Makita (34%), Hitachi (18%), Bosch (10%) and Panasonic (7%). Retailer and manufacturer forums are planned for early March to discuss the results of the trial so far, lessons learned and potential future solutions.

Consumers and tradies are being encouraged to complete a two-minute survey about power tool batteries to help inform the design of a permanent, national scheme and have the chance to win one of ten Bosch tool kits.

Batteries collected are sorted by type (chemistry), then transported overseas for final processing and recycling under strict environment and safety laws. As community awareness and collection volumes increase, local processing of alkaline and lithium batteries may become commercially viable in Australia, adding to the current local capabilities for processing lead acid batteries.

The pilot project continues until 30 June 2016. ABRI encourages everyone to get involved.

- Ends -



Positive environmental actions, for everyone.



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About ABRI

The Australian Battery Recycling Initiative (ABRI) is a not-for-profit association dedicated to responsible recycling of used batteries. Its members include battery manufacturers, distributors, collectors and recyclers; consumer electronics manufacturers, government agencies and environment groups, including Planet Ark. For more information: www.batteryrecycling.org.au.