



Lutheran Advocacy - Minnesota

*“We see the despoiling of the environment as nothing less than the degradation of God’s gracious gift of creation”
(ELCA Social Statement, Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice, 1993)*

Urgent Action Alert

Support Safe & Responsible Battery Recycling (SF 1690 / HF 1426)



Action Needed IMMEDIATELY

Contact your Minnesota state legislators in St. Paul TODAY. Send an email now or call before 9:30 a.m. Thursday, March 26. Use the Main Message below and supplement it with 2-3 talking points (scroll down for regular and faith-based Talking Points). Putting it in your own words makes it more impactful, especially if you can talk about what this would mean for your community.

[Who Represents Me: <https://gis.lcc.mn.gov/iMaps/districts/>]

Main Message to Share with Legislators

Please support SF 1690/ HF 1426, and encourage your colleagues on the Senate Commerce Committee and House Environment Committee to support the new battery collection and recycling language, which will replace the current electronic waste language. This will require battery manufacturers to fund safe, accessible collection across Minnesota and ensure responsible stewardship of battery waste.

Background: Why This Matters Right Now

Minnesota’s current battery disposal system is failing, costing taxpayers millions, putting workers at risk, and causing frequent landfill fires that pollute air, water, and soil. This **Thursday, March 26**, there will be **hearings on battery legislation** in the **Senate Commerce Committee** and the **House Environment Committee**.

You may recognize SF 1690 (Senate File 1690) and HF 1426 (House File 1426) as the electronic waste (e-waste) recycling bills. Unfortunately, **electronic waste collection and recycling** has faced significant opposition from industries and a major retailer, even though we revised the bills to make them more acceptable using language they suggested. We **will not be able to pass** electronic waste bills this session.

However, **at Thursday's hearings, legislative authors will introduce amendments** to delete the current electronic waste language and **replace it with battery collection and recycling language**. Battery manufacturers have been more engaged and willing to work with our coalition. We have an immediate **opportunity fix a dangerous and costly problem by shifting responsibility to battery producers and creating a safer, more effective recycling system statewide**. Although we will need to continue working to address the broader electronic waste problem, we could pass meaningful bipartisan legislation to protect Minnesota people and communities, and saves significant taxpayer money.

Possible Talking Points

- **Battery waste is a growing problem**, and Minnesota's current system is not equipped to handle it safely.
- Most batteries are still thrown in the trash instead of being properly recycled.
- Discarded batteries are causing **weekly landfill fires** across the state.
- These fires are dangerous for waste workers and first responders.
- **Waste fires release toxic pollution that harms air, water, and soil.**
- The 2023 Rice County landfill fire burned for a week and impacted thousands of residents.
- Minnesota **taxpayers currently bear the cost** of battery recycling through taxes and fees.
- The new language in SF 1690 / HF 1426 will **shift the financial responsibility to battery manufacturers.**
- The legislation would make battery recycling **free and convenient** for all Minnesotans.
- It would significantly **expand the number of battery drop-off locations** statewide.
- The bill requires clear, consistent public education about battery recycling.
- Batteries **contain valuable materials** like lithium, cobalt, and nickel that should be recovered, not wasted.
- Currently, billions of dollars' worth of **reusable metals are lost** to landfills and incinerators.
- Responsible recycling supports Minnesota's clean energy and sustainability goals.
- This is a **practical, bipartisan opportunity** to protect public health and saves money.

Faith-Based Talking Points

- **Caring for creation is a core Christian calling** and this policy helps protect the earth from harmful pollution.
- Preventing toxic fires and pollution is **part of loving our neighbors**, especially those most vulnerable to harm from air or soil pollution.
- **Stewardship means using resources wisely.** Recycling valuable materials honors that responsibility.
- **Protecting workers** from dangerous conditions **reflects a commitment to dignity and justice.**
- Reducing waste and pollution **aligns with a moral responsibility to future generations.**

Questions?

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