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PRESS RELEASE

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CHRISTMAS PUSH TO END BATTERY BURIAL

A major new push is under way today to end the annual dumping of batteries from Christmas toys and gadgets in landfill - with 80% of people saying they'd be more likely to recycle their batteries locally, if it was easier.

A new survey shows over a third (38%) of respondents are expecting to give or receive Christmas presents this year which use batteries. Of these,

- 62% said children's toys
- 23% said digital cameras
- 22% said gaming consoles such as Wii, Xbox, PSP

The poll, commissioned by battery recycling scheme European Recycling Platform (ERP), shows enthusiasm for recycling is strong. It found that 95% of people already recycle some of their household waste. More than a third (34%) said they have already recycled a battery. Government figures estimate that currently just 3% of batteries are recycled.

Other Christmas presents which respondents said they'd be giving or hoping to receive as Christmas presents were : music players (19%), mobile or smart phones (16%), laptops or notebooks (14%), beauty products such as cordless hair straighteners or electric toothbrushes (11%), cordless power tools (8%) and even Kindle electronic book readers (2%).

The research suggests that the number of batteries going to landfill will be reduced when national battery recycling collections start in the New Year.

Respondents were asked which places they would be most likely to take a battery for recycling. More than half (51%) said they would take batteries to a council recycling centre and over a third (36%) said shops which sell batteries.

Scott Butler, ERP's general manager, said:

"Christmas is a boom time for battery buying. And it's obvious from the survey results that people want to recycle batteries. This Christmas can be a little bit greener, if people keep batteries out of the bin and ready to take to a collection point in the New Year."

ENDS

KEY FACTS ABOUT BATTERIES

Source European Recycling Platform. None of this information is from the YouGov survey

- Around 40% of batteries are sold in the Christmas period.
- The UK uses more than 600 million batteries a year - around 21 batteries for every household or 22,000 tonnes in total.
- A tonne of batteries is equivalent to around 11,000 four-packs of AA batteries (based on an average 23g per AA alkaline battery).
- An estimated 3% of the UK's batteries are recycled, the rest go to landfill.
- Recycling batteries also recovers metals which can be re-used, saving the energy needed for extracting and refining raw materials.

About the Batteries Directive

- Battery compliance schemes were created to meet the requirements of the Batteries Directive, which comes into force in the UK on 1 January 2010. Any company which makes or imports batteries must now pay for a battery compliance scheme to collect, treat and recycle waste batteries on their behalf.
- The EU Directive sets a recycling target of 25% of all batteries sold by 2012 and 45% by 2016. The Directive will reduce the number of waste batteries ending up in landfill, where the heavy metals such as lead, cadmium or mercury can leach out and cause pollution.
- UK retailers selling batteries will have a legal obligation to collect waste batteries from 1 February 2010, if they sell over 32 kg per year (equivalent of one four-pack of AA batteries a day).
- Consumers will be able to return their waste batteries to shops selling similar batteries, even if they don't buy anything there.
- Local authorities are not required by the new legislation to collect waste batteries, but most of them are likely to provide collection points and form partnerships with battery compliance schemes.

NOTES TO EDITORS

- The survey was carried out online by YouGov plc, among 2087 adults in the UK. Data is weighted to be representative of all adults in the UK aged 18+. Fieldwork ran from 18-20 November 2009
- ERP's members include Duracell (owned by Procter & Gamble), which has a 55% share of the alkaline battery market, Microsoft, O2, Sony Computer Entertainment UK, Sony Ericsson, TomTom and Vodafone. ERP's battery producer members are responsible for an estimated 30% of the batteries sold in the UK.
- ERP's operational partner is Geodis Valenda. www.geodis.com ERP manages battery recycling in Ireland, Finland, Spain, Denmark, Austria, Poland and Italy.
- ERP has already recycled over 1,000 tonnes of portable batteries from these operations. ERP UK Ltd is the UK operation for European Recycling Platform. www.erp-recycling.co.uk

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