



Mailing Requirements and Limitations for Used Electronics with Rechargeable Batteries

Because a large percentage of electronics mailed for recycling via the USPS BlueEarth® Federal Recycling Program contain some type of battery, it is important for FRP mailers to familiarize themselves with [USPS Publication 52: Hazardous, Restricted, and Perishable Mail](#). To ensure that all used electronics are transported using surface transportation only, as of April 27th, 2026, all postage paid labels generated from the [Fedrecycling.com](#) website will be H labels using the USPS Ground Advantage™ Return mail service.

If the electronics you are shipping to the FRP recycler do not contain any hazardous or restricted materials, such as lithium batteries, there are no additional mailability or labeling requirements other than including your name and return address on the postage paid label and ensuring that your package weighs less than 70 pounds and that the length and girth does not exceed 108 inches. When you are shipping used electronics that do contain batteries it is important to understand what type of battery it is and how it will affect the mailability of those items.

Exhibit 349.244: Domestic Lithium Battery Mailability

	Surface Transportation	Air Transportation ¹	Mailpiece Limitations ²
Lithium Metal or Lithium Alloy Batteries^{3, 4} <i>Small, non-rechargeable, consumer-type batteries</i>			
Contained in (properly installed in equipment)	Mailable	Mailable	8 cells or 2 batteries 11 lbs.
Packed with equipment, but not installed in the equipment	Mailable	Mailable	8 cells or 2 batteries 11 lbs.
Without the equipment they operate (individual batteries in originally sealed packaging)	Mailable	Prohibited	5 lbs.
Lithium-ion or Lithium Polymer Batteries^{5, 6} <i>Small, rechargeable, consumer-type batteries</i>			
Contained in (properly installed in equipment)	Mailable	Mailable	8 cells or 2 batteries
Packed with equipment, but not installed in the equipment	Mailable	Mailable	8 cells or 2 batteries
Without the equipment they operate (individual batteries in originally sealed packaging)	Mailable	Prohibited ⁷	5 lbs.
Very Small Lithium Metal or Lithium-ion Batteries^{8, 9} <i>Exception for very small consumer-type batteries in USPS air transportation</i>			
Contained in (properly installed in equipment)	Mailable	Mailable	No limit on cells/ batteries 5.5 pounds
Packed with equipment, but not installed in the equipment	Mailable	Mailable	No limit on cells/ batteries 5.5 pounds
Damaged, Defective, or Recalled Batteries	Prohibited, unless approved by the director, Product Classification.		

1. Used, damaged, or defective electronic devices are prohibited from air transportation. This excludes devices that are new in original packaging, and manufacturer-certified new or refurbished devices.

2. When a mailpiece limitation of 8 cells or 2 batteries is applicable, a mailpiece may contain either 8 cells or 2 batteries, not both.

3. Each cell must not contain more than 1 g (gram) of lithium content.

4. Each battery must not contain more than 2 g aggregate lithium content.

5. Each cell must not exceed more than 20 Wh (watt-hour rating).

Most electronics with rechargeable batteries, such as cell phones, tablets, and laptop computers contain lithium-ion batteries which are DOT Class 9 hazardous material. If you mail laptops that contain rechargeable lithium ion or lithium polymer batteries, then you can only pack two (2) laptops with batteries per package. If you are mailing smaller lithium-ion cell batteries contained in cell phones, you can mail up to eight (8) phones with batteries per package (refer to Exhibit 349.244)

There is also an additional USPS labeling requirement to identify what type of HazMat is contained in the package. A DOT HazMat UN 3481 lithium-ion battery label must be applied to the address side of the package if the battery is contained “in the equipment” or a UN 3480 label if the batteries are contained “outside the equipment.” We recommend that any electronics containing a regulated hazmat battery be shipped “in the equipment” to avoid any possible contact between electrodes or other reactive materials.

Lastly, as info, packages containing used electronic devices with lithium batteries must be marked with the text “Restricted Electronic Device” and “Surface Transportation Only.” This requirement is already satisfied by using the H label (see below).



Restricted Electronic Device Surface Transportation Only

A sample USPS Ground Advantage Return label. It features a large 'H' in a box, a QR code, and a 'Scan for Free Package Pickup or to Find a Post Office' instruction. Below this is the 'USPS GROUND ADVANTAGE™ RETURN' section, which includes fields for 'FED EMPLOYEE NAME', 'FED EMPLOYEE ADDRESS', and 'HAZMAT - SURFACE ONLY RESTRICTED ELECTRONIC DEVICE'. A blue arrow points to the 'HAZMAT' text. Below the address is another QR code and the company name 'ARCOA GROUP'. The 'USPS TRACKING # HAZMAT' section contains a barcode and the tracking number '9238 5901 5016 4900 5771 55'. A large orange 'SAMPLE' stamp is overlaid on the tracking number. At the bottom, there is a note about recycling cell phones, PCs, servers, and storage devices, and a small QR code.

- 1) Print this label in color. The hatched border must appear in red.
- 2) Ensure the red border in the label is at least 100mm (3.9 in) wide by 100mm (3.9 in) high when printed. We have conveniently sized the label for you in this document, but please be sure to check as the actual printed size may vary depending on your printer or print settings.
- 3) Add your phone number to the label in case additional information about the shipment is needed.
- 4) Securely pack your item in accordance with applicable law (i.e. packing group requirements).
- 5) Attach the DOT label to the outside of your box on the same side as the address shipping label.
- 6) If reusing packaging, you must remove all old labels and markings.

Important Notes:

Shipping lithium batteries on their own is prohibited. Lithium batteries must be installed in or packed with electronics items to be shipped.

For more information, refer to Section 349 in Publication 52 using the link provided above.