

# First National Battery recycles lead acid batteries

It is a little known fact that something as seemingly unrecyclable as a lead acid battery is actually among the most recycled products globally.



"In South Africa, more than 90% of scrap lead acid batteries are recycled. That's compared to just 70% of beverage cans, 30% of plastics and just 26% of glass bottles," managing director of First National Battery, Russell Bezuidenhout, says.

This high rate of recycling is primarily due to the efforts of battery manufacturers that invest in collecting and properly recycling lead acid batteries across the country. This year, First National Battery established a dedicated recycling division, Scrap Battery, to facilitate this process.

Scrap Battery collects used lead acid batteries from over 120 battery centre outlets and other pick up points around the country on a regular basis. The organisation also offers a free collection service for high volumes of used lead acid batteries and pays a highly competitive rate for this scrap.

## Reasons for recycling

"There are many compelling reasons for recycling lead acid batteries including the conservation of natural resources, saving energy in the production process, protecting the environment from potentially harmful chemicals and creating jobs in the process," says Bezuidenhout.

First National Battery has invested in establishing its own full-fledged recycling facility in Benoni. This facility includes a battery breaker, an effluent plant that treats the acid, a lead smelter, a blending kettle to produce specialised alloys and scrubbers to control environmental emissions. Recently a plastic reprocessing plant has been commissioned, thereby completing the entire reprocessing cycle.

"We should never take our natural resources for granted - no matter how abundant they may seem, they are finite and must be conserved. As a local manufacturer, we take our responsibility to protect the environment and ensure the sustainability of our operations very seriously," concludes Bezuidenhout.

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