

Rad Power Bikes links up with Redwood Materials for e-bike battery recycling



Rad Power Bikes is partnering with Redwood Materials, a battery company founded by a former Tesla executive, to recycle e-bike batteries when they reach the end of their lifespan.

Customers will be able to bring in their depleted batteries to Rad Power Bikes' retail locations, after which the company will send them to Redwood Materials for processing and recycling. (Rad currently operates in North America.) Select Rad stores in California and Washington will also serve as drop-off locations for old smartphones, laptops, and tablets, for Redwood's growing consumer e-waste collection program.

It's a noteworthy deal considering that Rad Power Bikes is the number one seller of electric bikes in North America. The company has been at the forefront of the e-bike boom since the covid pandemic and has distinguished itself with its fat-tired e-bikes with big batteries and cargo-carrying capacity.

Redwood Materials was founded in 2017 by Jeffrey “JB” Straubel, a former chief technology officer of Tesla. In addition to breaking down scrap from Tesla’s battery-making process with Panasonic, Redwood also recycles EV batteries from Ford, Toyota, Nissan, Specialized, Amazon, Lyft, and others. The company also produces cathode and anode components for its battery customers.

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Redwood has said it can recycle and reuse more than 95 percent of the critical metals found in the lithium-ion batteries it collects, including nickel, cobalt, copper, aluminum, lithium, and graphite. Rad Power Bikes founder and chair Mike Radenbaugh said Redwood Materials was an appealing partner because it purports to do everything – process the battery, recycle the material, supply new battery components – that traditionally takes multiple stakeholders to accomplish.

“A lot of programs... the batteries are changing hands a few different times before they get to the recycler,” Radenbaugh said in an interview. “And there’s some efficiencies that can be lost there. We have enough volume where we can drive this program with Redwood to prove you basically have a big environmental impact here.”