



# SAFETY ALERT

## LITHIUM BATTERY SAFETY

Lithium batteries are found in many devices, such as: laptops, cell phones, power tools, electric vehicles, hoverboards, e-bikes and scooters.

In Vancouver Sun's article "[Take care charging or modifying lithium ion batteries, experts warn](#)" it notes that five to seven fire deaths in Vancouver this year are blamed on battery fires.

Lithium batteries are generally safe and unlikely to fail unless there is a defect or damage. When lithium batteries fail to operate safely or are damaged they may present a fire or explosive hazard. Damage from improper use, storage or charging may cause the batteries to fail.



## REDUCE YOUR RISK

Workers at risk include first responders, tow truck operators, auto repair technicians and body shop personnel. Recycling facility staff, those involved with repurposing batteries are at risk. As an employer know if this risk may be present in your workplace. Do regular inspections of your workplace and ensure your safe work procedures and practices control the risk.

| Consider |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>1</b> | <p><b>Installation</b></p> <p>Improper installation can cause a battery to leak or overheat. Do not use different types of batteries together. Do not mix old with new batteries. Do not mix rechargeable with non-rechargeable batteries.</p>  |
| <b>2</b> | <p><b>Use</b></p> <p>Do not attempt to repair a device containing a battery if it is not recommended by the manufacturer. Damage to the lithium battery can result in hazards such as overheating, fire or explosions. Do not use batteries that are: swollen, dented, have torn plastic wraps or show other signs of damage or wear.</p> |
| <b>3</b> | <p><b>Storage</b></p> <p>Batteries can catch fire or explode when in contact with metal. Store batteries in their original packaging and in a cool, dark place away from other chemicals. Remove batteries from devices that will not be used for an extended period of time.</p>   |
| <b>4</b> | <p><b>Disposal</b></p> <p>Avoid throwing batteries in the garbage. Many retailers and local governments have battery recycling programs that allow you to drop off old batteries.</p>   |

### Additional WorkSafeBC Resources:

<http://www.worksafebc.com/resources/health-safety/risk-advisory/fire-explosion-and-contact-with-electricity-in-damaged-electric-vehicles?lang=en>

### Additional Government of Canada Resources:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/toy-safety/battery-safety.html>