



FIRE RISKS: LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES

Lithium-ion batteries are found in all types of domestic electrical equipment including e-cigarettes, mobile phones, tablets, laptops, power banks, e-scooters, mobility scooters and electric bikes. The fire risks associated with lithium batteries are regularly circulated on social media. Such violent fires risk serious injury or death and homes being destroyed by fire – people are particularly vulnerable if these batteries are charged overnight whilst they are asleep. By following some simple tips, you can reduce the risk of this happening to you.

SAFETY TIPS FOR HOUSEHOLDERS

Do

- Only use electrical products that have the UKCA or CE mark.
- Use the correct charger designed for the device/battery.
- Regularly check the device, charger plugs and cables for signs of damage and overheating.
- Dispose of charger plugs and cables immediately if found to be damaged in any way or there is change in colour or appearance.
- Charge devices in a well-ventilated area, free of materials that could easily catch fire e.g. a kitchen work surface with no cupboards above.
- Charge devices during the day when there is the opportunity to spot faults early.
- Charge in an area where there is automatic smoke detection on the ceiling.
- If you find a device or battery starting to overheat, move it to a safe location outdoors.
- To extinguish a lithium battery if it starts smoking, rapidly cool it using water. For example, drop a small battery in a cup of water.

Don't

- Don't use cheap alternative chargers – they are not subject to rigorous testing and certification.
- Don't expose batteries to high temperatures or heat sources directly or for extended periods of time e.g. direct sunlight. (Whilst in use: maximum 60°C. During storage: maximum 70°C)
- NEVER charge devices on soft furnishings, such as beds or sofas.
- Don't use temporary extension leads and adaptors.
- Don't place lithium-ion batteries in your normal waste bins/chutes, damaged or undamaged. Contact your local council for guidance on safe disposal.

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