

Fire Prevention Week (October 5-11) Focuses on Lithium-Ion Batteries. Firefighters Share Tips on Using Them Safely

Fire Prevention Week 2025's theme focuses on the danger—and safe use—of lithium-ion batteries.

HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES, September 29, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- If asked to name three fire risks that might be present in a home, most people might list things like candles, the stove, or portable space heaters—maybe even a dryer vent or an overloaded outlet. But smartphones, electric weed trimmers, wireless drills, and even kids' e-bikes also pose a risk. Like many of the devices people rely on today, these items are powered by lithium-ion batteries.

"Lithium-ion batteries are in nearly every home today, and for the most part, we take them for granted," says Daniel Anderson, Cy-Fair's battalion chief of suppression training. "But especially when they are stored and used improperly, they can pose a serious risk of fire and injury."

That's why Cy-Fair Fire Department is joining fire departments across the country in recognizing Fire Prevention Week 2025, which runs from October 5–11. This year's theme is "Charge into Fire Safety," with a focus on raising awareness about the fire risks associated with lithium-ion batteries.

"Lithium-ion batteries have a lot of benefits, like their ability to store more energy than traditional batteries of the same weight—and they're generally safe when used correctly," shares Anderson. "But lithium-ion batteries can overheat, catch fire, or explode if damaged, misused, or improperly charged, or if they have design defects.

"When a lithium-ion battery ignites, it generates intense heat and can be very difficult to extinguish," he adds. "Fire departments across the country have reported fires involving e-bike batteries, hoverboards, and portable power packs."

Fortunately, knowledge and a little extra care can go a long way in preventing fires and injuries. To help communities stay safe, Anderson shares some essential tips on buying, charging, storing, and using lithium-ion batteries:

Be responsible when purchasing devices with lithium-ion batteries. Lithium-ion batteries commonly power smartphones, laptops, e-bikes, scooters, power tools, toys, and even household appliances. Always purchase batteries and devices from reputable manufacturers or

retailers—and be aware that numerous batteries sold online [do not meet important safety standards](#).

“While the price may be attractive, avoid off-brand or counterfeit batteries, which may lack safety features and quality control,” says Anderson. “Instead, look for products tested by a nationally recognized lab. Certifications such as UL (Underwriters Laboratories) or IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission) show that batteries and chargers have been tested for safety. For example, UL-listed or IEC-certified marks on the packaging or device are a good sign the product meets important safety standards.”

Charge devices safely (and use the right equipment). Read the manufacturer’s instructions and always follow them. When applicable, use only the charger that came with the device—incompatible chargers can overheat batteries. “Never charge devices under your pillow, on your bed, or on a couch,” Anderson adds. “These soft surfaces can trap heat. Use a hard, flat surface instead. Be especially vigilant with larger devices like e-bikes. Avoid charging them overnight and inside the home, and make sure they never block an exit path.”

Don’t overcharge. When a device is fully charged, unplug it from the charger. “Although it goes against the habits many of us have fallen into, don’t leave batteries and devices charging overnight or all day,” advises Anderson. “Unplugging devices when they are finished charging prevents overheating and prolongs the life of your battery. If you tend to forget, consider using a timer or smart plug that automatically shuts off power after a few hours of charging.”

Store batteries in a safe place. Lithium-ion batteries are most safely stored in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight and flammable materials. They should be kept out of reach of children and pets. “Don’t store loose batteries in drawers or bags where they can come into contact with metal objects,” Anderson warns. “If metal contacts the battery’s terminals, it can short circuit and lead to overheating or even an explosion.”

In particular, keep them cool. Lithium-ion batteries should be kept at room temperature whenever possible. “Avoid prolonged exposure to sunlight and extreme temperatures, as this can increase the risk of overheating and fires,” advises Anderson. “In our area, this means you may not want to store lithium-ion batteries in garages, attics, or outbuildings, especially during the sweltering summer months.”

Stop using batteries immediately if you notice warning signs. A battery may be failing if you notice:

- Excessive heat
- Leaking
- Swelling or punctures
- Unusual odor
- Discoloration
- Strange noises (popping, hissing, etc.)

"If you see smoke or flames from a battery-powered device, get out of the area immediately and call 911," urges Anderson. "Don't try to extinguish a lithium-ion battery fire yourself—these fires burn extremely hot, can spread rapidly, and may reignite."

Dispose of batteries safely. Whether damaged or not, never throw lithium-ion batteries in the trash or recycling bin. They can spark fires in garbage trucks, waste management facilities, and landfills. "Instead, take used or damaged batteries to a designated battery recycling or hazardous waste collection site," instructs Anderson. "Many large retailers, including Lowe's and Home Depot, accept rechargeable batteries for safe recycling at their customer service desks. Or, go to call2recycle.org/locator to find a drop-off location near you."

"Lithium-ion batteries and the devices they power can make our lives easier and more convenient—but we all need to be aware of the risks," concludes Anderson. "By purchasing, storing, charging, and disposing of batteries safely, you can minimize dangers and prevent fires. Fire Prevention Week 2025 is the perfect time to brush up on best practices."

To see battery fire safety videos and learn more about lithium-ion battery safety, visit the Fire Safety Research Institute's "[Take Charge of Battery Safety](#)" page and the National Fire Protection Association's "[Fire Prevention Week 2025: Charge into Fire Safety](#)" page.

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About CFFD:

The Cy-Fair Fire Department (CFFD) provides professional fire and emergency medical services to the citizens of Northwest Harris County, Texas. From its beginnings in the late 1950s, the Cy-Fair FD is now one of the largest, busiest combination fire departments in the United States, with over 40,000 emergency responses each year. CFFD covers the 164-square-mile area of Harris County Emergency Services District #9 (HCESD9) in the unincorporated part of Northwest Harris County. Responding from 13 stations strategically located throughout the territory, the 550-plus men and women of the fire department are among the best trained and equipped firefighters, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), and dispatchers in the nation.

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