

Battery and Vape Fires in the UK Waste System on Course for Record Year, New Public Tracker Shows

A new UK Battery Fire Tracker reveals fires caused by binned batteries or vapes are on course for a record year, striking the waste system every 9 days.



LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, July 8,

2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A fire

caused by a binned battery or vape has

been publicly reported in the UK waste system every 9 days so far in 2026, according to a new public tracker that maps every reported incident for the first time.

The [UK Battery Fire Tracker](#), published by battery waste compliance firm CellComply, has logged 88 fires in bin lorries, recycling centres and waste sites since January 2023, each one dated, mapped and linked to its published source. Reported incidents rose 88 per cent between 2023 and 2025, and 2026 is on course to be the worst year yet, with 20 incidents recorded by early July against 32 in the whole of 2025.

The data shows more than half of incidents (52 per cent) ignite in bin lorries, often forcing crews to dump burning loads in residential streets. Vapes are the single most identifiable cause, linked to 23 per cent of incidents a full year after the disposable vape ban. The East of England is the worst-hit region, with recent incidents including the fire at a Widnes recycling facility in June that destroyed 450 tonnes of material and was declared a major incident, and an April blaze in Thetford that forced Norfolk to suspend electrical waste collections county-wide.

Because the tracker only counts fires that reached the news or a fire service report, the true figure is far higher. Research by Material Focus and the National Fire Chiefs Council estimates more than 1,200 battery fires strike the UK waste system every year.

Elliot Blackler, Founder at CellComply, said: "Every one of these fires started with a battery or vape in the wrong bin. We built the tracker because the national statistics only appear once a year, while the fires happen every week. Shops and businesses that collect dead batteries and vapes are exactly where this risk builds up, and most have no idea the rules already require them to store and dispose of them safely."

The tracker is free for journalists, councils and researchers to use under a CC BY licence, including a downloadable dataset and a link for every individual incident. CellComply offers local and regional breakdowns of the data on request.

About CellComply

CellComply provides clear battery, WEEE, and dangerous goods compliance guidance for UK businesses. The London-based firm translates complex regulatory frameworks into practical workflows for organisations that handle, import, store, or dispose of batteries and battery-powered products.

Registered with the Environment Agency as an upper-tier waste broker, CellComply works with independent technical specialists to deliver tailored compliance reviews, safe partner collection routing, and defensible audit documentation.

For more information, please refer to the contact details below.

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