

LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES

the risks to your business





Know the risks of lithium-ion batteries and help prevent fire risks and downtime to your business

Lithium-ion batteries power countless workplace devices — from laptops and tablets to power tools, delivery vehicles, and backup systems. While essential for modern business operations, they present significant risks that can impact your employees, operations, and insurance coverage if not managed safely.



Know the risks of lithium-ion batteries

As technology becomes more embedded in everyday business operations, so do the risks — especially when it comes to lithium-ion batteries.

These power sources are common in a lot of gadgets used within a business, but they carry serious fire hazards if damaged, overcharged, or improperly stored.

Understanding how and when these incidents occur is essential to protecting your properties, tenants, and business continuity.

- Battery fires spread quickly, produce toxic smoke, and are hard to put out.
- Fires often start during charging or after physical damage.

Look out for these danger signs



Swelling or leaking batteries



Unusual smells or overheating



Devices not charging properly

STOP using faulty devices immediately. Move them to a safe place and call for help to know how to safely dispose of these batteries.

Set up safe charging areas

When charging devices with lithium-ion batteries, it's essential to ensure they're placed in a safe, controlled area to help protect your business from fire risks. These batteries can overheat or ignite if damaged or charged improperly, so it's important to follow basic safety practices.

Always charge devices on hard, non-flammable surfaces, keeping charging stations clear of exits in case of a fire. Be mindful of not charging devices near flammable materials, and never leave batteries charging overnight or unattended.

Taking these precautions can significantly reduce the risk of fire and safeguard your property, staff, and operations.



In 2023, Lithium-ion battery fires in the UK rose by

46%

British Safety Council

Buy smart, stay updated and train your team

When purchasing batteries or chargers, always choose products from **reputable manufacturers**. While cheaper alternatives may seem appealing, they can be poorly made or incompatible with your devices, leading to overheating, fire hazards, and costly damage that far outweighs any initial savings.

It's important to also carry out regular checks on lithium-ion batteries, and replace damaged batteries straight away. Training your team to help in ensuring lithium-ion batteries are safe to use is crucial to protecting your business:

- Make sure everyone can spot hazards and know what to do in an emergency.
- Include battery safety in new starter training.
- Create safe charging areas and include important key steps to safe charging.



Prevention is cheaper than recovery

A single battery fire could cost you thousands or even shut down your operations.

Stay charged but stay safe.

Update your fire risk assessment

Having an up to date fire risk assessment that is carried out on a regular basis is an important step to ensuring there is preventative measures in place for new and existing devices with lithium-ion batteries that are used in day to day tasks for your business.

- Include lithium batteries in your official fire safety plans.
- Ensure proper fire extinguishers are available (CO₂ or specialist for electrical fires).
- Review plans regularly—especially if you add new battery-powered tools or vehicles.



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