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Staying Safe with Lithium-ion Batteries

Lithium-ion batteries power many everyday devices, but misuse can lead to fire risks. They pack a lot of power into a small space. If they are damaged, defective or used incorrectly, they can overheat, catch fire, or even explode.

Protect your home and your devices

Checklist

- ✓ Use only the charger and battery recommended by the device manufacturer
- ✓ Keep batteries away from heat, water, and flammable materials
- ✓ Charge devices on a hard, flat surface—not on beds, couches, or under pillows
- ✓ Unplug devices once fully charged; avoid charging overnight or unattended
- ✓ Never use batteries that are swollen, leaking, discoloured, or smell odd
- ✓ Don't modify, rebuild, or mix battery parts
- ✓ Store batteries in a cool, dry place away from sunlight. Don't store or charge batteries below 0°C
- ✓ Recycle batteries at an approved drop-off location. Follow local municipal guidance on battery disposal
- ✓ Keep battery-powered devices away from exits or escape routes

What Is a Lithium-Ion Battery and Where Is It Used?

Lithium-ion batteries are today's most common rechargeable batteries. They're found in many devices at home and work, including phones, laptops, power tools, wheelchairs, lawn mowers, e-bikes, e-scooters, and electric vehicles.

What's the Risk?

Lithium-ion batteries can overheat, catch fire, or explode—especially if they're damaged, overcharged, or exposed to extreme temperatures. In some cases, internal damage can trigger a chain reaction called thermal runaway.

Know the Warning Signs

Stop using the battery and call 9-1-1 if you notice an odour, change in colour, too much heat, change in shape, leaking, or odd noises.

The four Key Elements of

Lithium-ion battery safety



Batteries

Only use batteries that have one of the recognized Canadian certification marks, such as CSA, cUL and cETL and continuously monitor the battery health.



Charging

Lithium-ion batteries can be a fire hazard when improperly charged. Avoid overcharging. Keep your battery in sight when charging and unplug it when charging is complete.



Tampering

Never attempt to modify, tamper with, or build your own lithium-ion batteries.



Disposal

Lithium-ion batteries are household hazardous waste and should never be placed in the garbage.

Choose Certified, Tested Lithium-ion Batteries

Buy from reputable Canadian retailers. Stick to trusted stores to avoid counterfeit or unsafe batteries. Many products sold online don't meet safety standards—and can put you at risk. Look for trusted certification labels before you buy such as CSA, cUL and cETL.



Make sure you have working smoke alarms on every story and outside all sleeping areas of your home. In the event of a fire, follow your home fire escape plan and call 911 once safely outside your home.



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