

LITHIUM ION BATTERY SAFETY

There has been a lot in the news about fires and explosions in devices such as smart phones, laptops, hoverboards, smoke alarms, and toys. Here is information to help you use items with these batteries safely!!!!

Why lithium batteries catch fire or explode

Generally, these batteries contain a metal coil, flammable lithium ion fluid, and tiny metal fragments floating in the liquid. The contents are under pressure and the battery is made to deliver a high-energy output in a lightweight component with thin partitions between the cells and the thin outer covering. When the battery is damaged, a short occurs and the spark can ignite or overheat the battery to exert enough pressure to cause a fire or explosion.

Safety tips to minimize risk of fire or explosion

- Keep and store batteries at room temperature, away from anything that can catch fire.
- Use the correct battery for each device and put it in the right way.
- Only use the charging cord that comes with the device.
- Do not charge a device on the bed or couch, or under a pillow or blanket to avoid overheating.
- When traveling, keep some space between battery-containing items so that in case of an accident, other batteries will be less likely to ignite if any items are damaged.
- Avoid overcharging because these batteries do not fare well if they are completely drained before recharging.
- Stop using the battery if you notice problems such as an odor, change in color or shape, leaking, odd noises, or too much heat when the device is touched.

This safety message is from the Botanica Lakes Safety Committee as part of the Florida Firewise Communities Program educational requirements.