



Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety **Community Outreach Plan**

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How to Use This Guide

This **Community Outreach Plan** is part of a collection of resources you can use to educate your community about ways they can Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety. The plan is designed as a blueprint for fire and life safety professionals aiming to educate the public about the risks and safety best practices associated with lithium-ion batteries. It includes **customizable templates** and other relevant information to fit local needs, especially in response to specific incidents or emerging battery fire hazards. The goal of this plan is to enhance public awareness and understanding through communication and engagement.

You can also use this plan for guidance during awareness months like Fire Prevention Month in October and Electrical Safety Month in May or in response to non-fatal lithium-ion battery fire incidents in your community.

- Engage with your community through scheduled and unplanned communication via social media, news media, and local events.
 - A scheduled opportunity is something you've planned ahead of time, like raising awareness about fire safety during Fire Prevention Month.
 - An unplanned or reactive opportunity is a message you share with your community in response to something like a lithium-ion battery fire incident in your area.
- Educate and engage audiences with relevant information, Q&A sessions, and community conversations to raise awareness and provide actionable information to help people understand the risks associated with lithium-ion batteries and how to better protect themselves and their property.

Key Resources

Talking Points

Talking points are the priority messages you want your audience to understand and remember. Reference the talking points when responding to the news or to your community members about questions related to lithium-ion battery safety.

These messages can also be used to prep spokespeople ahead of media interviews and staff members or volunteers before community events.

Template Media Pitches

A media pitch is an email you send to the media sharing a story idea and offering someone from your department to participate in an interview.

We've included a few templates in this plan. The pitches that follow cover:

- 1) A pitch to use during the holiday season to help the media link lithium-ion batteries to many of the popular devices on people's holiday wish lists. Fill in the placeholders and reach out to your local media to raise awareness about fire safety and lithium-ion batteries this holiday season.
- 2) A pitch to use at any point throughout the year. This pitch is not tied to a specific moment but rather intended to slot into your outreach plan at a time that makes sense for you. Fill in the placeholders and reach out to your local media to raise awareness about fire safety and lithium-ion batteries year-round.
- 3) A pitch to use following local, non-fatal lithium-ion battery fire incidents. Battery incidents are on the rise, so tactfully use the moment to educate the media and audiences on important safety information around use, care, and handling of lithium-ion battery-powered devices. (Please note: We do not recommend proactively pitching around fatal incidents out of respect.) Following a fatal incident, it's likely the media will contact you directly, and that is the appropriate time to respond.

Expert Tip: Offer interviews with your spokespeople, and use the talking points to help with interview prep.

Key Resources

Sample Press Release

A press release is an announcement that goes to journalists to share something newsworthy. Its main purpose is to grab the attention of journalists and news outlets, encouraging them to report on the information.

A sample press release has been included for you. It includes placeholders that you can update with information about local lithium-ion battery fire incidents, anything specific you're doing to reach your community and enhance safety around lithium-ion battery fire risks, and how to Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety.

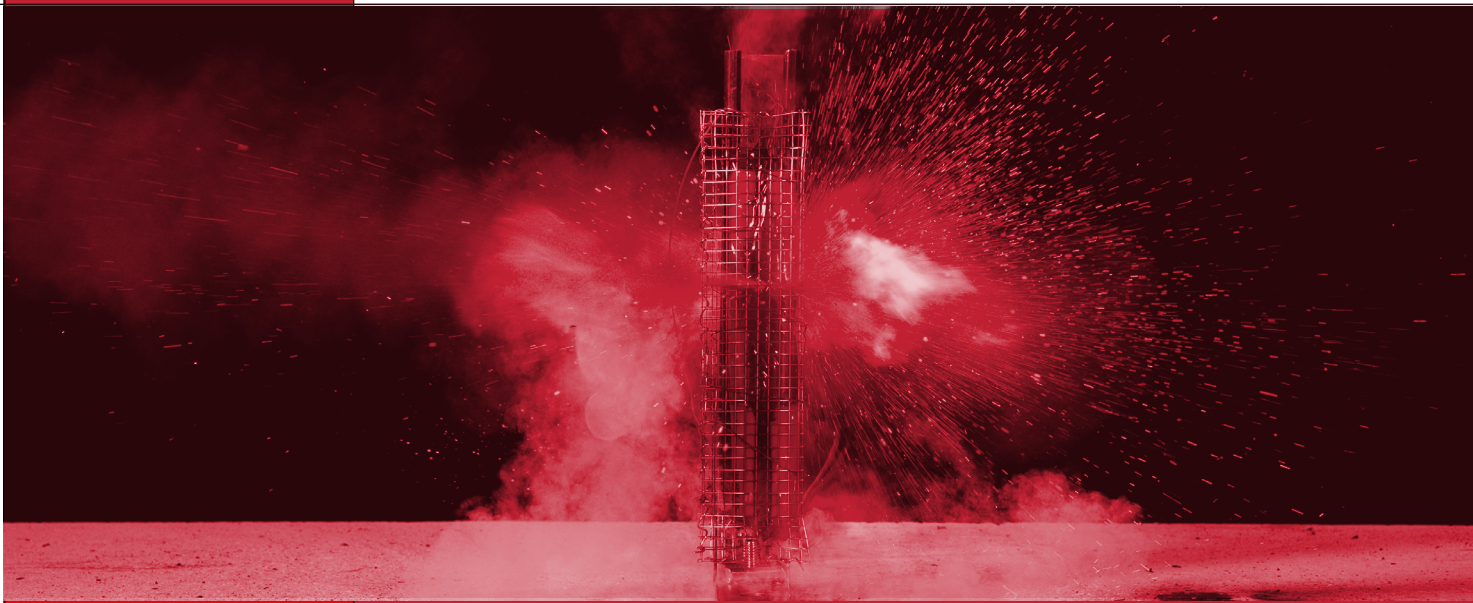
Outreach Campaigns & Resources

Sample Year-Long Campaign

Use the resources in this toolbox to adapt this sample year-long campaign and meet your outreach needs.

Sample Week-Long Campaign

Use the resources in this toolbox to adapt this sample week-long campaign to meet your outreach needs.



Key Resources

Social Media

Social media captions, videos, and images have been created for you to use on your posts. Download the captions and edit the text to fit your voice and style. Pair the text with the provided videos/images and publish across your social media pages whenever you wish to share messages about lithium-ion batteries with your followers.

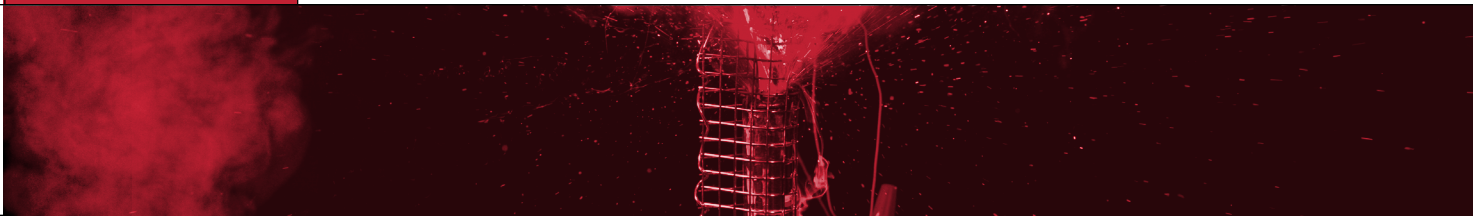
Consider adding ways to engage your audience that are a fit for your department, including for example, adding a question box on Instagram Stories to answer questions from your community or adding a live Q&A with one of your spokespeople.

Consider including hashtags like #LithiumIonBatterySafety #BatterySafety #FireSafety #FirePrevention #BatteryFireSafety #FireSafetyTips #HolidayFireSafety (when applicable).

In addition to the posts we've prepared, we recommend highlighting any news coverage featuring staff, volunteers, or your presence at community events discussing battery fire safety or related outreach initiatives. You can also highlight anything else you're doing as part of your battery safety efforts. Consider including a link to batteryfiresafety.org where your followers can learn more fire safety tips.

Other Toolbox Materials

Our [Toolbox](#) at batteryfiresafety.org also includes a number of resources like printable flyers, fact sheets, posters, and refrigerator magnets. Use these materials for any in-person community events. Distribute flyers and fact sheets at community centers, schools, and local events or collaborate with other local organizations to distribute these items at their events.



Talking Points

- Lithium-ion is the most popular rechargeable battery chemistry used today. It consists of single or multiple lithium-ion cells along with a protective circuit board.
- Lithium-ion battery-powered devices can be found in the home and workplace in many common products, such as cell phones, laptops, electric power tools, wheelchairs, lawn mowers, e-bikes, e-scooters, and electric vehicles.
- Despite their many advantages, lithium-ion batteries have the potential to overheat, catch fire, and cause explosions. This most commonly occurs when the batteries are damaged, suffer electro-chemical abuse (e.g., from overcharging or completely draining the battery), are in high- or low-temperature environments, or have an internal short-circuit. The heat from an internal short circuit can cause chemical reactions that lead to thermal runaway.
- Thermal runaway is the primary driver of risks related to lithium-ion batteries. Thermal runaway is what happens when a fault causes self-heating in a battery cell. The process of self-heating generates incredible heat—more than 1,000° F—which decomposes the cell into smoke and flammable and toxic gases. When the heat from thermal runaway spreads to other cells, it can cause them to fail, and the rest of the battery to go into thermal runaway. Thermal runaway often immediately ignites a fire, but if the ignition is not immediate, the buildup of flammable gases can cause an explosion that blows out windows and spreads fire throughout a structure (e.g., an apartment, house, or storefront).
- From the first sign of a problem, you could have less than one minute to escape a battery fire. With the speed of these fires, the best way to be safe is to prevent a fire from starting. Prioritizing these safety measures will help you Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety. The acronym “C.H.A.R.G.E.” helps you remember important safety tips, with each letter standing for a different safety practice.



Talking Points

Choose Certified Products:

Prioritize your safety by selecting lithium-ion battery-powered devices that are certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory to ensure they meet important safety requirements.

Handle Lithium-Ion Battery-Powered Devices with Care:

Always follow manufacturer guidelines and use the provided charger for lithium-ion battery-powered devices. Avoid modifying batteries or chargers, and charge your devices in safe environments away from extreme temperatures, direct sunlight, and flammable materials. For larger devices, such as e-bikes, charge in a location that does not block your exit path, is separate from sleeping areas, and is ideally outside your home. Refrain from overnight charging of large devices.

Always Stay Alert for Warning Signs:

Regularly inspect devices for any signs of damage, such as swelling or punctures. Be aware of unusual sounds like hissing or popping. Watch out for excessive heat or a strange odor. White or gray wispy smoke indicates there is immediate danger of fire. If you notice any of these warning signs, stop using the lithium-ion battery-powered device immediately.

Recycle Devices and Batteries Properly:

Responsibly dispose of old or damaged batteries and devices by taking them to a designated battery recycling center. Never discard batteries, chargers, or battery-powered devices in regular trash bins.

Get Out Quickly if There's a Fire:

Know the warning signs to look and listen for a fire, and get out if you see or hear a fire. Follow your home fire escape plan to leave immediately, closing doors behind you as you exit and call 9-1-1.

Educate Others on Safe Practices:

Help protect your friends and loved ones by sharing how they can Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety.



Media Pitches: Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety

Simply copy and paste the following media pitches into an email. Be sure to fill in the specifics to fit your location and organization.

Holiday Season Battery Safety Pitch

SUBJECT: A safety message from [FIRE DEPT/SAFETY ORG] for this holiday season

Hi XXXX:

Following a recent lithium-ion battery fire in [city/county, state], we're reaching out to remind residents about fire safety and lithium-ion battery-powered devices during the holidays. **Please let me know if you'd like to conduct an interview with [X, our] representative.**

Popular lithium-ion battery-powered devices, like headphones, cell phones, gaming devices, e-bikes, and children's remote control cars or ride-on toys are at the top of many holiday lists. However, many people don't realize their favorite tech gadgets are powered by lithium-ion batteries that can become unstable if damaged, improperly used, overcharged or exposed to extreme temperatures. This instability can lead to overheating, sparking and even explosions.

Just in time for the holiday shopping season, the [Fire Safety Research Institute](#), part of [UL Research Institutes](#), is releasing a new [public service announcement](#) to educate shoppers about the safe selection and care of lithium-ion battery powered devices. This initiative, part of [FSRI's Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety campaign](#), vividly demonstrates the energy potential stored within the everyday devices in our homes and highlights the importance of preventing lithium-ion battery fires.

This is important as fires in modern homes with synthetic furnishings can have an escape time that's fewer than three minutes, while a fire involving a larger device like an e-bike or scooter can reduce that escape time to less than one minute.

We encourage you to share these tips with your viewers/readers this season.*

*Please see the last page in this section for tips on battery safety

**Fire Safety
Research Institute**

Year-Round Battery Safety Pitch

SUBJECT: Education and fire prevention from [FIRE DEPT/ SAFETY ORG] on lithium-ion battery-powered devices

Hi XXXX:

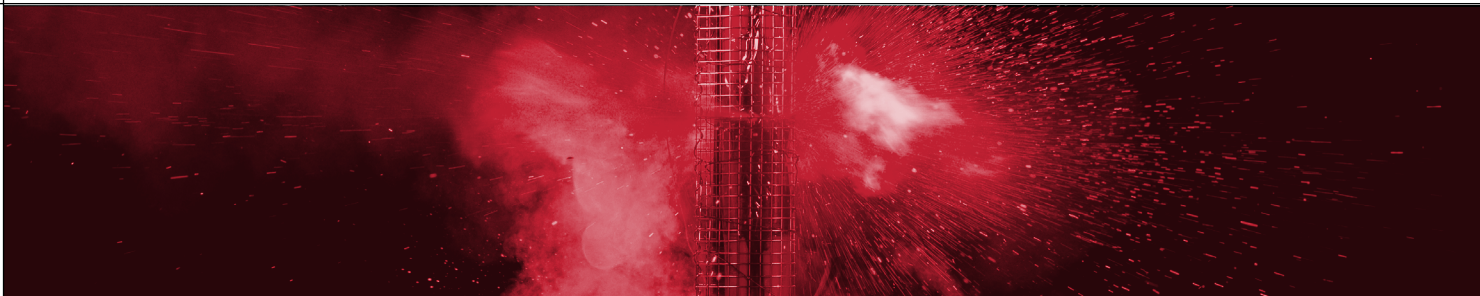
We're reaching out with information around fire safety and lithium-ion battery-powered devices.

Many people don't realize the tech gadgets around their home are powered by lithium-ion batteries that can become unstable if damaged, (punctured, swollen), improperly used (overcharged), or exposed to extreme temperatures. This instability can lead to overheating, sparking and even explosions.

The [Fire Safety Research Institute](#), part of [UL Research Institutes](#), is releasing a new [public service announcement](#) to educate families about the safe selection and care of lithium-ion battery-powered devices. This initiative, part of FSRI's [Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety campaign](#), vividly demonstrates the energy potential stored within the everyday devices in our homes and highlights the importance of preventing lithium-ion battery fires.

This is important as fires in modern homes with synthetic furnishings can have an escape time that's fewer than three minutes, while a fire involving a larger device like an e-bike or scooter can reduce that escape time to less than one minute.

We encourage you to share these tips with your viewers/readers this season.*



*Please see the last page in this section for tips on battery safety

**Fire Safety
Research Institute**

Local Year-Round Battery Safety Pitch

SUBJECT: Education and fire prevention from [FIRE DEPT/ SAFETY ORG] on lithium-ion battery-powered devices

Hi XXXX:

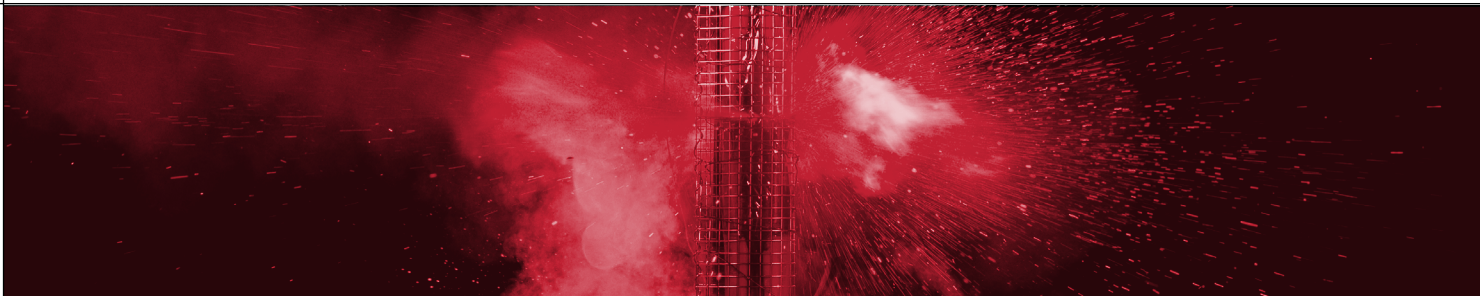
Following a recent lithium-ion battery fire in [city/county, state], we're reaching out with timely information around fire safety and lithium-ion battery-powered devices. Please let me know if you'd like to conduct an interview with [X, our] representative.

Many people don't realize the tech gadgets around their home are powered by lithium-ion batteries that can become unstable if damaged (punctured, swollen), improperly used (overcharged), or exposed to extreme temperatures. This instability can lead to overheating, sparking, fire, and even explosions.

The [Fire Safety Research Institute](#), part of [UL Research Institutes](#), is releasing a new [public service announcement](#) (PSA) to educate families about the safe selection and care of lithium-ion battery-powered devices. This initiative, part of [FSRI's Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety campaign](#), vividly demonstrates the energy potential stored within the everyday devices in our homes and highlights the importance of preventing lithium-ion battery fires.

The demonstration includes batteries used in many common household devices, including personal shavers, remote control toys, drones, laptops, handheld power tools, e-scooters and lawn equipment.

This is important as fires in modern homes with synthetic furnishings can have an escape time that's fewer than three minutes, while a fire involving a larger device like an e-bike or scooter can reduce that escape time to less than one minute.*



*Please see the last page in this section for tips on battery safety

**Fire Safety
Research Institute**

Copy and paste these tips at the end of your pitch to media outlets

We encourage you to share FSRI's Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety tips with your viewers/readers*

Choose Certified Products:

Prioritize your safety by selecting lithium-ion battery-powered devices that are certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory to ensure they meet important safety requirements.

Handle Lithium-Ion Battery Powered Devices with Care:

Always follow manufacturer guidelines and use the provided charger for lithium-ion battery-powered devices. Avoid modifying batteries or chargers, and charge your devices in safe environments away from extreme temperatures, direct sunlight, and flammable materials. For larger devices, such as e-bikes, charge in a location that does not block your exit path, separate from sleeping areas, and ideally outside your home. Refrain from overnight charging of large devices.

Always Stay Alert for Warning Signs:

Regularly inspect devices for any signs of damage, such as swelling or punctures. Be aware of unusual sounds like hissing or popping. Watch out for excessive heat or a strange odor. White or gray wispy smoke indicates there is immediate danger of fire. If you notice any of these warning signs, stop using the lithium-ion battery powered device immediately.

Recycle Devices and Batteries Properly:

Responsibly dispose of old or damaged batteries and devices by taking them to a designated battery recycling center. Never discard batteries, chargers, or battery-powered devices in regular trash bins.

Get Out Quickly If There's a Fire:

Know the warning signs to look and listen for and get out if you see or hear them. Follow your home fire escape plan to leave immediately, closing doors behind you as you exit and call 9-1-1.

Educate Others on Safe Practices:

Help protect your friends and loved ones by sharing how they can Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety.



Sample Press Release

Sample Press Release

[FIRE DEPT] Reminds Holiday Shoppers to Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety When Purchasing and Using Lithium-ion Battery-Powered Devices

[FIRE DEPT] shares safety risks and tips from Fire Safety Research Institute (FSRI), part of UL Research Institutes, for safer use of lithium-ion battery powered devices

Nov. X, 2024 - Columbia, Md. — As holiday wish lists fill with the latest tech gadgets, [FIRE DEPT] is reminding shoppers of the unique fire risks that lithium-ion batteries pose and how to prevent fires through proper storage, charging and recycling.

Lithium-ion batteries are commonly found in household items like personal shavers, remote control toys, drones, laptops, handheld power tools, e-scooters and lawn equipment. While lithium-ion battery-powered devices have many benefits like longer charge time and higher efficiency, they do pose unique fire risks. They store energy more densely than traditional batteries and can become unstable if damaged (punctured, swollen), improperly used (overcharged), or exposed to extreme temperatures. This instability can lead to overheating, sparking and even explosions.

Just in time for the holiday shopping season, [FIRE DEPT] is sharing the [Fire Safety Research Institute's \(FSRI\)](#) part of [UL Research Institutes](#), new [public service announcement](#) (PSA) to educate shoppers about the safe selection and care of lithium-ion battery-powered devices. The PSA vividly demonstrates the energy potential stored within a range of lithium-ion battery sizes from one cell to more than 100 cells that are used in many common household devices.

“The size of the battery scales the potential severity of the consequences of improper handling, charging and storage,” said [FIRE DEPT SOURCE NAME AND TITLE]. “The larger the battery, the higher the energy potential, which means they release more energy when they fail, leading to faster fire spread and potential damage.”

Fire departments worldwide are experiencing an increase in fire incidents, injuries and deaths involving lithium-ion battery-powered devices. [According to data from UL Solutions](#), since 2022 there have been 188 explosions and more than 3,000 fires caused by consumer products powered by lithium-ion batteries.

For people giving or receiving tech gifts this holiday season, [FSRI's Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety](#) tips outline how to select, care for and dispose of lithium-ion battery-powered devices properly:

Choose Certified Products:

Prioritize your safety by selecting lithium-ion battery-powered devices that are certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory to ensure they meet important safety requirements.

Handle Lithium-Ion Battery-Powered Devices with Care:

Always follow manufacturer guidelines and use the provided charger for lithium-ion battery-powered devices. Avoid modifying batteries or chargers and charge your devices in safe environments away from extreme temperatures, direct sunlight, and flammable materials. For larger devices, such as e-bikes, charge in a location that does not block your exit path, separate from sleeping areas, and ideally outside your home. Refrain from overnight charging of large devices.

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Responsibly dispose of old or damaged batteries and devices by taking them to a designated battery recycling center. Never discard batteries, chargers, or battery-powered devices in regular trash bins.

Get Out Quickly if There's a Fire:

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Educate Others on Safe Practices:

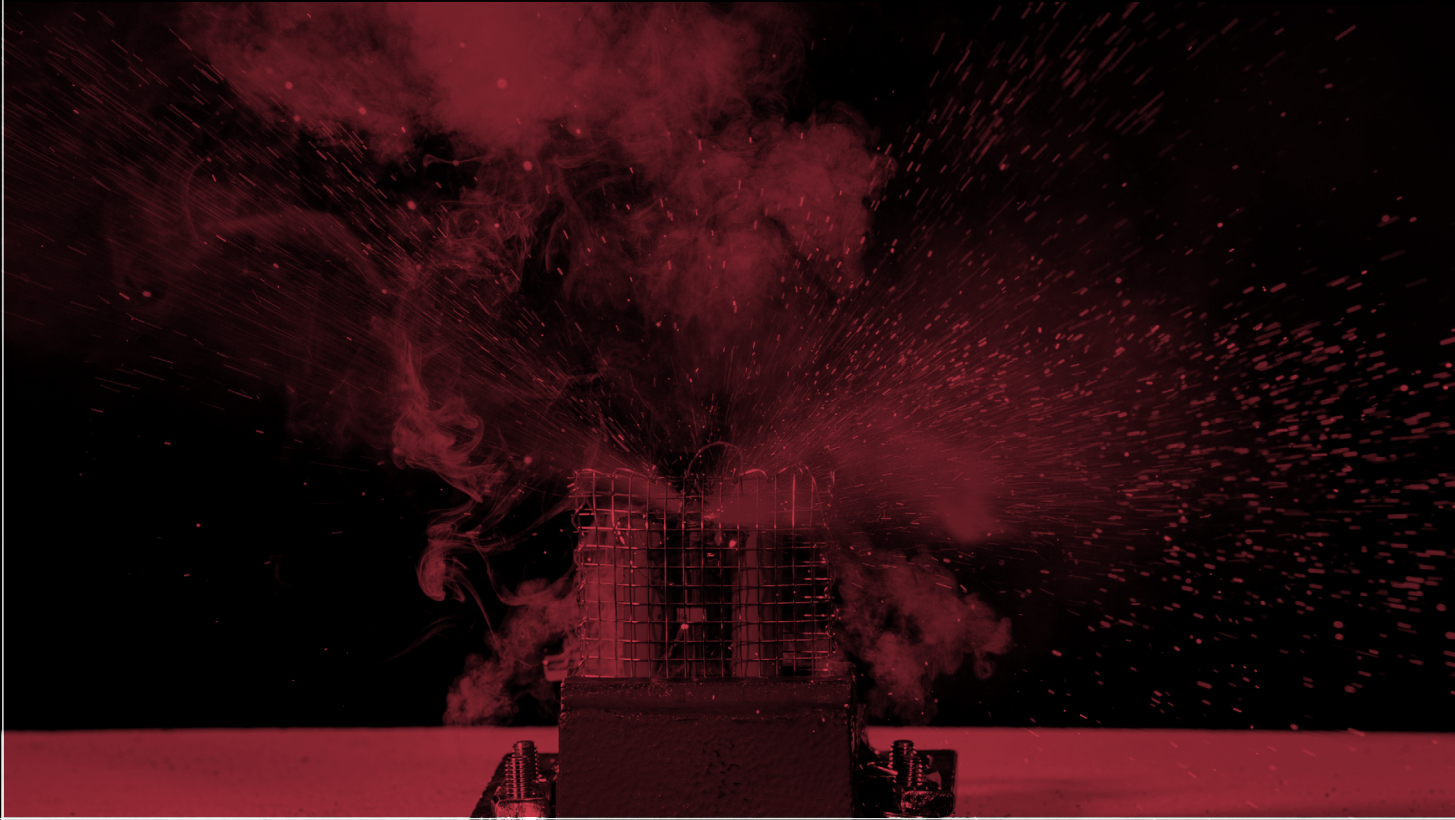
Help protect your friends and loved ones by sharing how they can Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety.

To fully Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety, it is crucial to see these guidelines not as individual tips, but as interconnected steps. Each measure supports and reinforces the others. Embracing and adhering to all of these guidelines can significantly reduce risk and create a safer home or work environment. For more information, visit batteryfiresafety.org.

**About [FIRE DEPT NAME]
[boilerplate for fire department]**

Media Contact
[Name
Email
Phone number]





Outreach Campaigns & Resources

Outreach Campaigns & Resources

Sample Year-Round Campaigns

There are several moments throughout the year when battery safety information resonates strongly with both the media and the public. Align your outreach activities—such as social media posts and community events—with these key times to reach people and media when they are already discussing these topics. Customize your materials for the time of year.

March

Consumer Protection Week (March 2—March 8, 2025)

This week is a good opportunity to educate your community about the safety aspects of the electronic devices they purchase and the importance of choosing certified products, focusing on how to safely identify and use devices with lithium-ion batteries.

May

Electrical Safety Month (May)

Help emphasize the electrical risks associated with improper use, storage, or charging of lithium-ion batteries.

June—August

Summer Season

Highlight the risks that high temperatures can pose to lithium-ion batteries in devices like e-bikes, e-scooters, lawn tools, and portable fans, especially when used or stored outdoors.

October

Fire Prevention Month

This is an excellent time to discuss battery safety as part of broader conversations about fire safety and prevention.

November

Holiday shopping

Many people purchase lithium-ion battery-powered devices as gifts this time of year (e.g., Black Friday, holiday shopping), and many of the products are not certified. This is a great time to highlight the importance of choosing certified products, as well as general battery safety.

Outreach Campaigns & Resources

Below we've outlined a sample timeline for a week-long campaign like Consumer Protection Week or Fire Prevention Week. This is just an example and can be adjusted to work for you and your organization's priorities.

Preparation Phase (4-5 weeks before awareness week)

- Materials Preparation
 - Download documents from the [Outreach Plan Toolbox](#), including talking points, media pitches, fact sheets, and social media caption templates.
 - Get any approvals you need within your organization to share the materials with the media or your community.
 - Share the date and theme in advance to help your audience understand the awareness week you want to draw attention to.

Media Outreach (2-3 weeks before awareness week)

- Identify and contact local reporters who report on safety topics, have reported on lithium-ion battery incidents, or who you have relationships with.
- Send customized pitches highlighting what the awareness week is and why it's important. Offer interviews with your department spokesperson.
- Follow up with these contacts to address any questions, provide additional information, and confirm interview schedules.



Outreach Campaigns & Resources

Implementation Phase (Week of planned campaign—it's showtime!)

*Use provided videos and sample social media posts for the suggested timeline below.

Monday - Launch

Social Media Post: Kick off with a post introducing the awareness week and sharing [this PSA](#) to give your audience an overview of what it means to Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety.

Send a follow-up email to media outlets about the week's activities and key messages regarding battery safety.

Share this PSA video with information to raise awareness of the risks associated with lithium-ion batteries.

Lithium-ion batteries offer many benefits but come with risks, such as thermal runaway and potential fires if misused or damaged. A September 2024 study by @UL Standards & Engagement found 40% of Americans are unaware of this risk, highlighting a need for better safety awareness. Learn more about Taking C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety: <https://batteryfiresafety.org/>

[#FireSafety #BatteryFireSafety](#)

[PSA Video](#)

Tuesday

Social Media Post: Explain what a lithium-ion battery is, using the graphic and caption from our social resources.

Share this carousel of images to explain what a lithium-ion battery is to your followers.

Lithium-ion is the most popular rechargeable battery chemistry used today. It consists of single or multiple lithium-ion cells along with a protective circuit board. From cell phones, laptops and tablets to electric scooters and children's toys, these rechargeable batteries are found in many commonly used items on holiday gift guides or already in your homes. Learn more about lithium-ion batteries and important safety tips: <https://batteryfiresafety.org/>

[#FireSafety #BatteryFireSafety](#)

[Carousel Graphic: What is a lithium-ion battery?](#)

Outreach Campaigns & Resources

Wednesday

Social Media Post: Explain the risks of lithium-ion batteries using the graphic and post from our social toolkit.

Participate in media interviews and share any news stories featuring your spokespeople as posts on your social media.

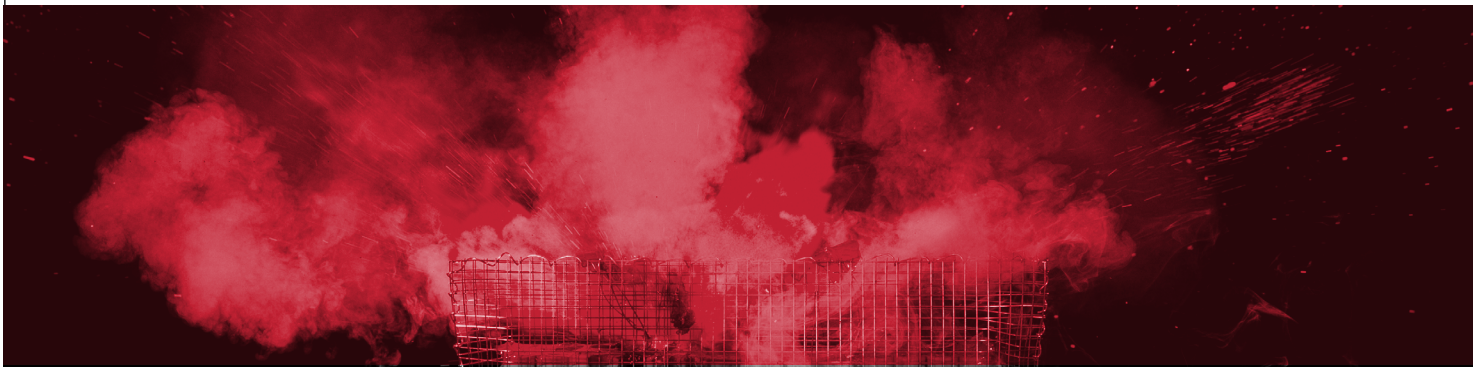
Share this graphic to help your followers understand the risks of lithium-ion batteries

“Fires involving lithium-ion batteries can be particularly dangerous because they burn very hot and are difficult to extinguish with water. Lithium-ion batteries are everywhere these days, powering many of the devices topping holiday wish lists this year. While powerful and effective, these batteries pose risks if not handled properly. Here’s why:

Unlike traditional batteries, lithium-ion batteries store energy through a chemical reaction. If damaged (punctured, swollen), improperly used (overcharged), or exposed to extreme temperatures, this reaction can become unstable. This instability can lead to overheating, sparking, and even explosions. Learn more about how to mitigate your risks: <https://batteryfiresafety.org/>

#FireSafety #BatteryFireSafety

[Carousel Graphic: What are the risks?](#)



Outreach Campaigns & Resources

Thursday

Highlight the importance of using certified lithium-ion battery-powered devices. Use the “C” from C.H.A.R.G.E. Use the video from our toolbox and include a link to the [Take C.H.A.R.G.E. fact sheet in your social posts.](#)

Questions box: Publish a question box in Instagram Stories asking the community to share questions they have on safe battery handling and storage. Follow up on Instagram Stories with your responses.

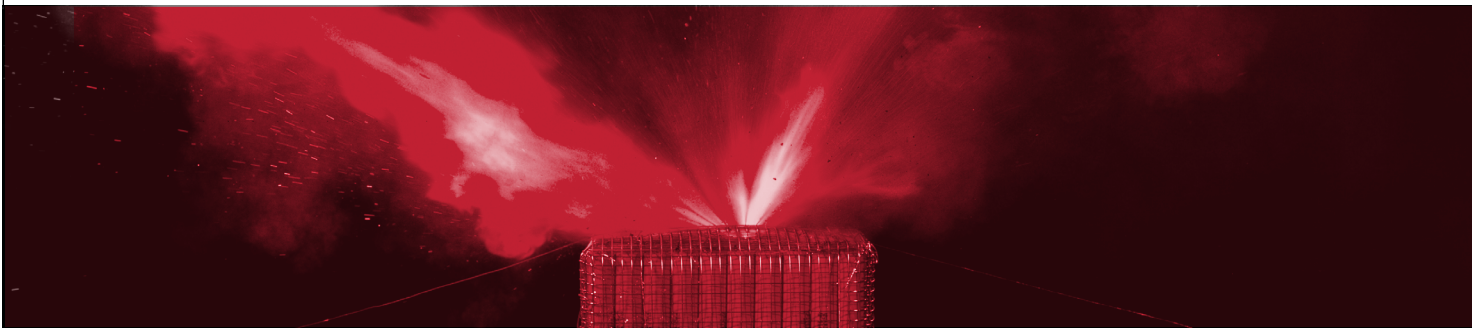
Community Engagement: Distribute educational flyers and safety-related refrigerator magnets at local community centers and schools.

Encourage your followers to read this fact sheet and share it with their communities

Want to learn how to Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety? Check out the fact sheet below and share it with your communities to help everyone stay safe this holiday season and year round. <https://shorturl.at/zhvFZ>

#FireSafety #BatteryFireSafety

[Fact Sheet Thumbnail](#)



Outreach Campaigns & Resources

Friday

Recap the awareness week and ways your audience can Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety. You can share the carousel of all the letters in the acronym and encourage your audience to practice safe habits year-round. You can also share photos from any community events in your social media posts.

Follow Up: Send thank you notes to media and community partners who participated in any activities you hosted.

For example, “Thank you so much for helping bring this important message to our community. We appreciate your support in educating people about the importance of the safe use and handling of lithium-ion battery-powered devices. We hope to work with you again for future fire safety campaigns!”

Share this post to help your followers understand the steps they can take to Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety

In recent years, fires involving various lithium-ion battery-powered products have been increasing at an alarming rate. And these fires are fast – so fast that you may only have seconds (not minutes) to escape. Here are six ways you can Take C.H.A.R.G.E. of Battery Safety. Learn more: <https://batteryfiresafety.org/>

#FireSafety #BatteryFireSafety

[Carousel Graphic: Take C.H.A.R.G.E](#)



Outreach Campaigns & Resources

Additional Social Posts

Share this video to educate your followers about the importance of choosing certified products

Keep in mind this shopping season -- when purchasing lithium-ion battery-powered devices, look for products that are listed or safety certified by a nationally recognized testing laboratory to ensure they meet important safety requirements. Learn more: <https://batteryfiresafety.org/>

#FireSafety #BatteryFireSafety

[Video: Choose Certified](#)

Share this video to inform your followers about the warning signs to look for with lithium-ion battery powered devices

While lithium-ion battery-powered devices have a lot of benefits like longer charge time and higher efficiency, they do pose unique fire risks. Here are warning signs you can look out for to protect yourself, your loved ones and your property – and always stay alert! Learn more: <https://batteryfiresafety.org/>

#FireSafety #BatteryFireSafety

[Video: Always Stay Alert](#)



