

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## LOCAL AGENCIES LAUNCH BATTERY SAFETY CAMPAIGN

*Education efforts aimed at reducing fire risk and increasing proper disposal.*

Lithium-ion batteries are part of everyday life, providing many benefits. However, there are also significant dangers associated with the batteries. Local solid waste management and fire response agencies are working together to raise awareness about the risks associated with lithium-ion batteries and ways to minimize dangerous fires and increase proper disposal. The [Battery Smart Spokane](#) campaign provides tips and information about ways to prevent the growing number of fires caused by lithium-ion batteries that power micro-mobility devices such as e-bikes and e-scooters, smaller electronics such as cell phones and laptops, and electric vehicles. As the use of these items has increased in recent years, so, too, has the number of fires associated with them.

“In Spokane County we have seen an increase in fires caused by improperly disposed lithium-ion in solid waste disposal in collection trucks, at transfer stations, and at the Waste to Energy Facility,” says Deb Geiger, Regional Solid Waste Manager for Spokane County. “These fires are extremely dangerous for solid waste management workers, firefighters, and the public.”

“Fires caused by lithium-ion batteries are very difficult to extinguish and pose significant additional risk to firefighters,” says Lance Dahl, Fire Marshal for Spokane Fire Department. “This is a public safety issue in our homes and businesses every day.”

“With lithium-ion batteries becoming more and more prevalent in devices we use every day, the dangers they pose continue to increase,” says Spokane Valley Fire Department Fire Marshal Brett Anderson. “The best way to reduce the threat is by charging, storing, and disposing of them in a safe and responsible manner.”

Battery Smart Spokane recommends these tips when buying, charging, storing, and disposing lithium-ion batteries to help prevent fires:

- **Only purchase and use devices, batteries, and charging equipment** that are **listed by a nationally recognized testing lab** and labeled accordingly.
- Use **charging equipment that is only compatible with your device**. To be safe, use only the charging equipment that is supplied with your device.
- **Do not keep charging** the device or device battery after it is fully charged.
- **Stop using** your device if the **battery shows signs of damage**, such as an unusual odor, excessive heat, popping sounds, swelling, or change in color.
- Only have **device repairs performed by a qualified professional**.
- **Remove batteries from devices** and toys before disposing safely.
- **Lithium-ion batteries** need to be **disposed safely at household hazardous waste collection areas** at the Waste to Energy Facility and Solid Waste Transfer Stations.
- **Do not put lithium-ion batteries in the trash or recycling**. Search for drop off locations for lithium-ion batteries on the [Spokane River Forum's online waste directory](#).

Battery Smart Spokane encourages residents to learn more about the hazards of lithium-ion batteries by better understanding how lithium-ion battery fires start, people can take the necessary steps to minimize associated risks and safely use their electronics and other devices powered by these batteries. **Learn more at [BatterySmartSpokane.com](#)**.

#### ***About Battery Smart Spokane***

[Battery Smart Spokane](#) is a campaign to increase awareness and educate the Spokane County community about the importance of best practices for purchasing, charging, storing, and disposing lithium-ion batteries. Community partners include City of Spokane, Spokane County, City of Spokane Fire Department, Spokane Valley Fire Department, Spokane County Regional Solid Waste System, and Spokane River Forum. Information is compiled through regional specialists and the National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA®) [Charge into Fire Safety](#) campaign resources.