

Lithium-Ion Battery Fire Safety at Restaurants

On Monday, March 3, 2025, City of Mountain View Fire Department units were dispatched to respond to a fire at a restaurant on Castro Street. The cause of the fire was possibly a lithium-ion battery used to charge equipment. The battery was unattended. The fire also caused a CO2 cylinder, also stored in that room, to explode. The fire caused approximately \$100,000 in damages.

Lithium-ion rechargeable batteries are commonly used in electronics found in businesses such as phones, laptop computers, tablets, e-scooters, and other devices requiring plug-in charging. These batteries are small and powerful, but when used incorrectly or damaged, they can overheat, catch fire, or explode.

Safety Tips

- Purchase and use devices that are listed by a qualified testing laboratory. <https://www.osha.gov/nationally-recognized-testing-laboratory-program/current-list-of-nrtls>
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Only use the battery that is designed for the device. **Do not use aftermarket or generic batteries or chargers.**
- Put batteries in the device the right way.
- Only use the charging cord that came with the device.
- Do not keep charging the device or device battery after it is fully charged.
- Plug directly into a wall electrical outlet for charging. **Do not plug chargers into a power strip or overload an outlet.**
- Keep batteries at room temperature and away from heat or direct sunlight. Do not charge them at temperatures below 32°F (0°C) or above 105°F (40°C).
- Store batteries away from anything that can catch fire.
- Do not charge a device overnight.
- Do not charge a device near exits.
- **Maintain all fire protection equipment.**

Signs of a Problem

Stop using the battery if you notice these problems: odor, change in color, too much heat, change in shape, leaking, or odd noises. If it is safe to do so, move the device away from anything that can catch fire. Call 9-1-1.

Battery Disposal

Never put lithium-ion batteries in the trash or recycling. Do not discard batteries in piles. Take the batteries to a battery collection location or contact HHW.org for instructions.