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Con Fire offers tips to be battery-smart and fire-safe

Submitted by Supervisor Diane Burgis

Over the last two years, the Contra Costa County Fire Protection District investigators have noted a trend of increasing risks of lithium-ion batteries causing fires across the county.

Lithium-ion batteries supply power to many devices including phones, laptops, electric scooters, smoke alarms, and even cars. With the rapid rise in popularity of these electric power supplies over recent years, many residents are only just learning of their dangers, and how to use and dispose of them.

With a significant amount of power being held in such a confined compartment, they can overheat, catch fire and explode. In the month of June, in the Con Fire district alone, there were three reported fires caused by lithium-ion batteries. Two of these resulted in extensive damage to the homes where they were located.

Con Fire advises residents to learn proper and safe usage of lithium-ion batteries.

Tips include: Follow manufacturer's instructions exactly; Only use batteries designed for the device being used; Put batteries in the right way; Only use the charging cord and charger that came with the device; Do not charge any device under a pillow, on your bed, or on a couch, or in any other confined space; Do not continue charging once the device is fully charged; Keep batteries at room temperature; Store batteries away from anything that can catch fire;

Do not put lithium-ion batteries in the trash; take them to proper recycling locations; Charge batteries in a flat, dry area away from children, and direct sunlight; Stop using any device immediately upon noticing problems with the battery

Whenever possible, store lithium-ion batteries in the garage, in an outdoor shed or other location outside your home.

For more details about lithium-ion battery safety and e-bike battery safety, visit:
www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/79825/Lithium-Ion-Battery-Safety
www.contracosta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/79824/E-bike-E-scooter-safety

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