

## Lithium-Ion Battery Safety Tips

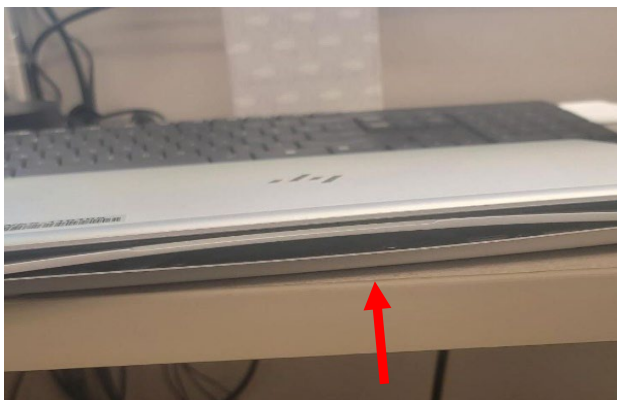
February 2025

Lithium-ion batteries play an important part in everyday life and have become the industry standard for rechargeable batteries that are common in many electronics such as smartphones, laptops, power tools, scooters, etc.

When lithium-ion batteries overheat, are used the wrong way, or are defective, they are prone to explosions which can result in injuries and fires.

Use these safety tips to help avoid lithium-ion battery injuries and fires:

- Only use batteries that are designed for the device in use. Check the manual or the manufacturer website for the size and type of batteries to use.
- Do not store or charge your device around flammable or combustible materials, such as flammable liquids, wood, plastic, or paper. Remove flammables and combustibles from the charging or storage area.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for charging.
  - Only charge your device with the power cord or charging method designed for the device.
  - Never leave a battery pack or device unobserved during charging unless manufacturer instructions state a device can remain connected to a power supply.
  - When it comes to e-bikes, e-scooters, and electric vehicles, the safest place to charge these devices is outdoors away from any structure or enclosure and not in direct sunlight.
- Keep batteries at room temperature and well-ventilated. Never keep lithium-ion batteries near heat sources or in high temperatures, such as direct sunlight, hot cars, heating utilities, etc.
- If you notice signs that the battery has a problem, such as overheating, odor, leaks, bulging or change in color/shape, shut off the device and move it away from anything that can catch fire.
  - If the device is a work issued computer, contact the Help Desk as soon as possible at [helpdesk@it.uwm.edu](mailto:helpdesk@it.uwm.edu).
  - If the device is work issued equipment, notify your supervisor as soon as possible.
- Never throw lithium-ion or other batteries in the trash. They cause pollution and can be a fire hazard. University Safety & Assurances' Office of Environmental Protection manages recycling and disposal of batteries. Exception: Alkaline and carbon zinc batteries can go in the trash.
  - For battery pickup, contact [hazwaste@uwm.edu](mailto:hazwaste@uwm.edu) or submit a [Waste Pickup Request](#).
  - For more info regarding battery disposal or recycling, see [Battery Disposal](#).



Picture: Laptop Battery Expanding



Picture: Rechargeable Battery Fire