



February 19, 2026

DAL: DACF #26-11  
Subject: Lithium-ion Battery Safety Reminder

Dear Adult Care Facility Administrator:

Lithium-ion batteries are powerful and convenient, fueling many essential devices used daily in adult care facilities such as resident and staff micromobility devices including e-bikes and scooters, power wheelchairs, and lift equipment. They are also present in portable medical devices, personal electronics including phones, laptops, and tablets, and emergency preparedness equipment such as backup power packs. However, when not handled or stored properly, these batteries can pose significant fire and safety hazards including overheating, thermal runaway, explosions, and toxic fumes. In recent years, significant volumes of fires have been attributed to lithium-ion batteries. This letter provides important information regarding the safe handling, use, and storage of these batteries within your facility.

Title 18 of New York Codes, Rules and Regulations Sections 487.11 and 488.11 require that Operators of adult care facilities assure furnishings and equipment are provided which do not endanger resident health, safety and well-being, support daily activities, and are appropriate to function. Sections 320 and 322 of the 2025 Fire Code of New York State set forth requirements for storage of lithium-ion and lithium metal batteries and the operation and maintenance of powered micromobility devices.

To mitigate the risks associated with lithium-ion batteries, it is important to implement the requirements in these regulations, in addition to the following safety guidelines:

**Follow Manufacturer's Instructions:** Always use, charge, and store devices according to manufacturer's instructions. Do not disassemble or modify the device's battery in any way.

**Use Approved Devices and Chargers:** Only use the charger that came with the device. Purchase and use devices that are designed and approved for the device and have been tested by a reputable agency, such as those bearing a UL (Underwriters Laboratories) mark. Check for product recalls before buying.

**Charge in a Safe Location:**

- Always plug devices directly into a wall electrical outlet. Do not use power strips, extension cords, or overload outlets.
- Charge devices in a cool, dry, and flat area away from exits and exit pathways, heat sources, flammable materials, liquids, direct sunlight, and potential tripping hazards.
- Do not charge batteries at temperatures below 32 degrees Fahrenheit or above 105 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Avoid charging devices under pillows, on beds, or on couches.

**Never Leave Charging Unattended:** Do not leave devices unattended while charging, especially overnight and while sleeping. Remove devices and batteries from the charger once they are fully charged.

**Inspect Regularly:** Frequently check devices and batteries for any signs of damage, such as cracks, breaks or bulging, and in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

**Indoor and Outdoor Storage:** Keep devices and batteries stored in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight and out of extremely high or low temperatures. Unless batteries are new or refurbished and installed in or for packed for use with the equipment they were designed to power, storage of batteries are subject to the additional requirements outlined in Section 320 of the 2025 Fire Code of New York State.

**Be Vigilant for the Following Warning Signs, Which May Indicate a Failing Battery:**

- Excessive Heat: If a battery feels extremely hot to the touch.
- Swelling or Bulging: Any unusual lumps or leakage from the battery or device.
- Unusual Noises: Hissing, cracking, or popping sounds.
- Odor: A strong or unusual smell emanating from the battery.
- Smoke: If the device is emitting smoke, a fire may have already started.

**If Warning Signs are Observed:**

- Stop Use Immediately: Turn off the device and unplug it from the power source.
- Move Safely: If it is safe to do so, move the device away from anything flammable using tongs or gloves.
- Evacuate: Leave the area.
- Call 9-1-1: Immediately contact emergency services.
- Fire Extinguisher Information: If a battery or device catches fire, do not try to put the fire out yourself. These types of fires spread quickly, aggressively, and can become explosive or reignite. Water may not prevent a battery from burning and fire extinguishers may not work on these types of fires.

**Battery Disposal:** Never discard lithium-ion batteries in regular trash or recycling bins. Recycling is always the best option. Contact your local community or designated battery recycling locations for proper disposal instructions. Do not put discarded batteries in piles.

**Review the Facility's Fire Safety Plans:** Include emergency response actions to be taken upon detection of a fire or possible fire involving lithium-ion battery storage or devices.

**Powered Micromobility Devices:** To be used, stored, or charged on facility grounds, these types of devices and their storage and charging areas must comply with the above and the following:

- Devices shall be listed and labeled in accordance with Underwriters Laboratories 2272 or 2849, as applicable.
- Only listed devices utilizing listed charging equipment shall be permitted to be charged.
- Removable storage batteries are not to be stacked or charged in enclosed cabinets unless the cabinet is listed in accordance with Underwriters Laboratories 1487 or specifically designed and approved for such purpose.
- A minimum distance of 18 inches shall be maintained between the location of each battery on each powered micromobility device and each removable storage battery during charging.

- The indoor storage room or area shall be protected by a fire alarm system using smoke or fire detection.

We appreciate your dedication to ensuring the safety of those who reside in New York State adult care facilities. If you have questions about the content of this correspondence, please email [acinfo@health.ny.gov](mailto:acinfo@health.ny.gov).

Sincerely,

Karen Walker, Deputy Director  
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and Assisted Living Surveillance

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