

MANUFACTURING SAFETY ALERT

Ask Yourself
“Could it happen here?”

DESCRIPTION OF EVENT

Fires Linked to Power Tool Batteries

In manufacturing more fires are happening because of power tool batteries, especially the lithium-ion type. Understanding the risk is important for all workers so they can stay safe while working.

Workers must understand the risks, particularly related to thermal runaway in lithium-ion batteries, which can lead to fires, explosions, and harmful gas release.

Factors like overcharging or exposure to extreme heat can trigger this dangerous chain reaction. Following strict safety protocols is crucial for handling battery-powered equipment.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

1. Use tools safely by following manufacturer instructions and using matching batteries and chargers.
2. Regularly check batteries for damage and replace if needed.
3. Store batteries in well-ventilated, cool areas and secure them during movement.
4. Dispose of batteries properly according to company and local regulations, especially lithium-ion batteries which should be recycled to protect the environment.



Photos: Workplace Safety North

IMPORTANT TAKE AWAY

Workers must remain vigilant and follow necessary precautions when handling battery-powered equipment to mitigate heightened fire risks from power tool batteries.



BCFSC welcomes all incident or near-miss submissions. To protect your privacy, we will review and remove all identifying information.

To share an incident or to subscribe to the Safety Alert of the Week, visit: www.bcfsc.org/safety-alerts/

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