

# media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



## Lithium-ion battery warning as Home Fire Safety Week launched

**Monday, 30 May 2022**

**HOME FIRE SAFETY WEEK: 30 May – 5 June 2022**

The State's fire services are warning that the misuse or over-charging of lithium-ion batteries in household electrical appliances and e-bikes is a growing fire risk in South Australia.

The Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) and SA Country Fire Service (CFS) are highlighting the modern fire trend at the launch of **Home Fire Safety Week 2022**, after 32 fires in two years left a collective \$1.3m damage bill.

Minister for Emergency Services, Joe Szakacs said that the popularity of electrical appliances, toys, power tools, bikes, scooters, hover-boards, phones and tablets containing lithium-ion batteries is linked to the trend.

"Fire investigators are finding that the overwhelming majority of these fires are the result of human error, and **not** due to equipment faults or malfunctions.

"Remember, the key to preventing these fires is to follow the advice of the State's fire services. The right behaviours and choices could save your life, home or prized backyard shed," Minister Szakacs said.

MFS Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Peter Mason said fire investigators have identified the most common causes of lithium-ion battery fires in household appliances.

"They've found that the majority of these fires are linked to the overcharging of batteries, using non-compliant or non-compatible batteries and charging equipment, or by people building their own batteries at home."

"These are choices that could cost you your life, your home or your garage. NEVER overcharge batteries, always use compatible, genuine batteries and chargers and never try to make your own battery. It's simply not worth the risk," MFS ACFO Mason said.

CFS Executive Director Operations, Brett Loughlin warned the public to never buy non-genuine chargers or batteries.

"Be very wary of purchasing replacement batteries or replacement chargers on the internet, as you may unknowingly buy a non-genuine product that doesn't match the original appliance which can result in a devastating fire, as we have seen in recent years.

"Always purchase compatible, Australian certified batteries or chargers that are recommended by the appliance manufacturer. Always seek to make your purchase from a reputable Australian retailer. It's not worth gambling with your family's safety on the internet," Mr Loughlin said.

Finally, the MFS and CFS warn the public not to leave batteries or devices unattended for extended periods while charging, and to ensure they're charged on a sturdy, non-combustible surface with adequate ventilation.

***Home Fire Safety Week 2022 launches on Monday, 30 May, ending on Sunday, 5 June 2022 with the aim of eliminating the prevalence of injuries, fatalities and property loss in South Australia linked to house fires.***

**For media enquiries and interviews call the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770**

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