



## Essential guide: our critical risk expectations

# Battery safety

The word **MUST** means it is a mandatory requirement. Where you see the words **YOUR CALL** it means you are strongly advised to do this, but you can use your judgement.



## Safe use of lithium-ion and other batteries and products

Batteries, especially lithium-ion batteries, can pose serious risks if misused, damaged, or of poor quality. These risks include fire, explosion, and toxic smoke inhalation. Fires involving lithium-ion batteries burn fiercely, are difficult to extinguish, and can spread quickly.



## Identifying lithium-ion batteries

The batteries can be cylindrical, flat, rectangular, or pouch/device specific. They can be difficult to identify as there is currently no requirement or standard for labelling.

If the battery is rechargeable and has 'Li' or 'Lithium' printed on it, you can safely assume that it is a lithium-ion battery. Common printings include:

- lithium ion
- Li-ion
- Li-po
- Lithium-polymer
- or other variations of 'Li'.

## Charging devices

When charging items, you **MUST**:

- **Use original chargers:** Always use the original battery charger supplied with the product, or replacements sourced from the supplier or another reputable seller.
- **Inspect before charging:** Look for any signs of damage or wear before charging. If the product or battery shows signs of damage, do not use or charge it.
- **Monitor charging:** Be observant during charging for any signs of smoke or noise. Disconnect the product or battery from the charger as soon as it is fully charged. Avoid charging overnight or while you are sleeping.
- **Safe charging location:** Charge the product or battery in a place away from ignitable and flammable materials. Use a charging cabinet where available. For personal e-transport devices, charge them outside under a cover or in a garage.



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## Purchasing batteries and lithium-ion batteries

When purchasing new products, you **MUST**:

- **Buy from reputable suppliers:** Always purchase lithium-ion batteries, products, or chargers from reputable suppliers to ensure quality and safety.
- **Check product information:** Ensure that the product markings and information, including the manufacturer's instructions, are in English and that any plug fitted is a New Zealand type plug with insulated pins.
- **Supplier Declaration of Conformity (SDoC):** Obtain a copy of the SDoC from the supplier before purchasing. If this cannot be provided, do not purchase the product.



## What to do in case of fire

**Act immediately** If you notice any of the following:

- pungent odours
- discolouration, blistering, bulging, or swelling of the casing
- leaking electrolyte
- heating up and feeling extremely hot to touch
- abnormal popping, hissing or crackling sounds

If safe to do so, take the item outside.

Wear PPE when handling the damaged items to avoid potential risks (electric shock, secondary fire, and exposure to toxic, corrosive, and flammable vapours and substances).

**In case of fire or explosion:** Do not attempt to put out the fire. Evacuate the area and call emergency services immediately. Batteries contain chemicals that are harmful if inhaled or exposed to skin or eyes

## Ongoing use and maintenance

When using battery operated devices, you **MUST**:

- **Avoid modifications:** Never modify the product, battery, or charger.
- **Consider temperature exposure:** Never store or leave batteries and devices in areas where they can be exposed to extreme heat or moisture, for example in direct sunlight or in parked vehicles.
- **Follow manufacturer instructions:** Adhere to the manufacturer's instructions for battery care and replacement.

[protectatcontact.co.nz](https://protectatcontact.co.nz)

Protecting the important stuff



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## Damaged batteries and devices

Batteries that show any signs of damage **MUST** be disposed of as soon as possible as they can become involved in a fire.

Damaged batteries and battery-powered devices include those that

- have been involved in or exposed to fire
- are overheated and may have emitted vapours or smoke
- are swollen, bulging, leaking, cracked, dented, punctured, or crushed
- have been exposed to, or submerged in, water or other liquid – remove batteries from the device to prevent further damage.



## Disposal and recycling

Don't place batteries in regular waste bins. They can start fires in refuse facilities and can contain chemicals harmful to the environment when improperly disposed of.

Use dedicated battery recycling bins which can be found at most Contact sites. If you're unsure where these are located, contact the administrator for that site.

Recycling lithium-ion batteries helps reduce environmental impact by recovering valuable materials and preventing hazardous substances from entering the environment