

# SAFETY ALERT

WHS-ALERT – 013 -2022

**Date:** 04/10/2022

**Area of Concern:** All Staff and Students

## Lithium Battery Hazards

During 2022 an incident has occurred within a JCU laboratory. A delivery of lithium (iron) batteries spontaneously combusted.

The batteries were still in the manufacture packaging and had been delivered the same day as the fire.

The fire alarm activated alerting security who responded quickly and extinguished the fire before Queensland Fire and Emergency Services arrived.



## Lithium Batteries

Lithium batteries are safe when used as per manufacturer's instructions. However these batteries can spontaneously combust or explode if physically damaged, subjected to voltage/current outside of the rating for the battery and when heated.

Lithium batteries are in many forms: computer batteries, button batteries, large car type batteries, children's toys (hover boards, gel blasters).

## Safe Practices:

- **When storing lithium batteries on campus. Store in rooms with fire detection away from combustible materials or flammable substances.**

- **Store externally to buildings if appropriate space is available.**
- **Be nearby when batteries are charging and disconnect the charger once fully charged.**
- **Do not use damaged batteries.**
- **Always use batteries as instructed by the manufacturer.**
- **Purchase from a reputable company to avoid counterfeit products.**



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