

## How Can Boards of Coops and Condos Prevent Fires and Other Injuries Due to Electrical Vehicles and Similar Devices?

In recent months, there has been a dramatic increase in fires resulting from faulty or malfunctioning lithium-ion batteries and chargers used in e-bikes, e-scooters, and other electronic mobility devices.

In New York City alone, there have been approximately 200 fires and six deaths, according to the New York City Fire Department, related to lithium-ion batteries. Most recently, on November 5, 2022, an e-bike battery combusted inside a Manhattan high-rise apartment building, injuring nearly 40 people. The New York City Council Committee on Fire and Emergency Management held a hearing on November 14, 2022, to address these safety concerns and the adoption of legislation to ban the sale of second-use and uncertified batteries and other remedial measures.

While the legislature has not yet passed such a ban, boards of condominiums and cooperatives should consider adopting house rules to limit the storage and/or use of electric bicycles, scooters, or similar e-mobility devices or vehicles within their buildings. As an alternative to banning such devices, boards might consider prohibiting the use of any products not certified to Underwriters Laboratories (UL) safety standard UL2271, *Batteries for Use in Light Electric Vehicle (LEV) Applications*. Light electric vehicles (e.g., bicycles, scooters, hoverboards, golf carts, all-terrain vehicles, motorcycles, etc.) certified to UL2271 have passed rigorous testing to demonstrate safety even under extreme conditions, such as impact, crushing, heat and flame, water, UV light, over-charging, over-discharging, short-circuiting, imbalanced charging, operation at the maximum specified temperature, vibration, shock, drops, rollover, and other adverse conditions. A device certified to UL2271 has been demonstrated not to explode, catch fire, rupture, leak electrolytes, present an electric shock hazard, or lose any protection controls as a result of any of the above tests.

We recommend that boards reach out to their counsel to discuss any amendments to the house rules and how best to enforce these suggested bans.



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