

ELVIS Safety, Health & Environmental Committee Bulletin

How Dangerous Is That 9-Volt Battery?

Most people would think it's not dangerous at all. In fact, I bet that many of you have "tested it" by placing it on your tongue and felt a little tingle. So what's the danger? Well one ELVIS employee's relative found out the hard way when their junk drawer at home started to catch on fire. Here's what happened. The relative had a smoke detector that started chirping, which was a good sign that the battery was beginning to fail and needed to be replaced. They took the battery out and replaced it with a new one. They weren't entirely certain that the battery was out of life, so they tossed it in the junk drawer. Little did they know the battery had come to rest touching a pair of scissors. The metal scissors came into contact with the positive and negative terminals of the 9 volt battery and began to heat up. The heat from the scissors caused combustible material in the drawer to catch fire. Luckily they smelled the burning drawer and acted quickly to extinguish the fire. Here is a photo of the drawer.



Where the drawer was catching on fire & charred debris

The ELVIS Safety, Health & Environmental Committee encourages all of you to go through your junk drawers, or any other place you store batteries, and ensure they are stored separately from anything conductive. A safe way to store those 9-volt batteries is by covering the terminals with something non-conductive, like electrical tape, or placing them separately into zip lock baggies.