

Public Safety Meeting Agenda



Committee Chair: Terry Clements

800 Michaelian Office Bldg.
148 Martine Avenue, 8th Floor
White Plains, NY 10601
www.westchesterlegislators.com

Tuesday, September 19, 2023

4:15 PM

Committee Room

CALL TO ORDER

Please note: Meetings of the Board of Legislators and its committees are held at the Michaelian Office Building, 148 Martine Avenue, White Plains, New York, 10601, and remotely via the WebEx video conferencing system. Legislators may participate in person or via Webex. Members of the public may attend meetings in person at any of its locations, or view it online on the Westchester County Legislature's website: <https://westchestercountyny.legistar.com/> This website also provides links to materials for all matters to be discussed at a given meeting.

Joint w/ Legislation

Legislator Symra Brandon will be joining remotely from Yonkers Public Library 28 Wells Avenue 5th Floor Yonkers, NY 10701

Legislator Colin Smith will be joining remotely from 1132 Main St Suite 1 Peekskill, NY10566

MINUTES APPROVAL

I. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

[2023-316](#) **LOCAL LAW-Regulation of Lithium Ion Batteries**

A LOCAL LAW amending the Laws of Westchester County for adding a new Chapter 542 concerning the regulation of Lithium Ion Batteries.

COMMITTEE REFERRAL: COMMITTEES ON LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Guests:

Richard Wishnie, Commissioner, Department of Emergency Services
Susan Spear, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Emergency Services
Douglas Stiller, Chief of Special Operations , Department of Emergency Services
James Maisano, Director, Department of Consumer Protection
Jason Ward, Chief of Fire Training, Department of Emergency Services
Chris Johnson, Fire Training Technician, Department of Emergency Services
Louis Vetrone, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Environmental Facilities
Melissa Rotini, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Environmental Facilities
Andrew Sandor, Fire Chief, New Rochelle Fire Department
Howard Reiss, Fire Chief, Fairview Fire Department
Gus Spedalieri, Fire Chief, Greenville Fire Department

2023-315 PH-Regulation of Lithium Ion Batteries

A RESOLUTION to set a Public Hearing on "A LOCAL LAW amending the Laws of Westchester County for adding a new Chapter 542 concerning the regulation of Lithium Ion Batteries." [Public Hearing set for _____, 2023 at _____ .m.]. LOCAL LAW INTRO: 2023-316.

COMMITTEE REFERRAL: COMMITTEES ON LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Guests:

Richard Wishnie, Commissioner, Department of Emergency Services
Susan Spear, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Emergency Services
Douglas Stiller, Chief of Special Operations , Department of Emergency Services
James Maisano, Director, Department of Consumer Protection
Jason Ward, Chief of Fire Training, Department of Emergency Services
Chris Johnson, Fire Training Technician, Department of Emergency Services
Louis Vetrone, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Environmental Facilities
Melissa Rotini, Assistant Commissioner, Department of Environmental Facilities
Andrew Sandor, Fire Chief, New Rochelle Fire Department
Howard Reiss, Fire Chief, Fairview Fire Department
Gus Spedalieri, Fire Chief, Greenville Fire Department

II. OTHER BUSINESS

III. RECEIVE & FILE

**2023-317 COMM-Letter of Support-Lithium Ion Batteries Proposed
Legislation-West. Co. Dept. of Emergency Services**

Forwarding a letter of support from James F. Cuffe, Deputy Fire Coordinator for the Cause and Origin Team at Department of Emergency Services, for the proposed legislation regarding Lithium Ion Batteries.

COMMITTEE REFERRAL: COMMITTEES ON LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY

**2023-318 COMM-Letter of Support-Lithium Ion Batteries Proposed
Legislation-Greenville Fire District**

Forwarding correspondence from Gus Spedalieri, Fire Chief, Greenville Fire District, Town of Greenburgh, in support of proposed legislation regarding Lithium Ion Batteries.

COMMITTEE REFERRAL: COMMITTEES ON LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY

[2023-319](#) **COMM-Letter of Support-Lithium Ion Batteries Proposed
Legislation-Fairview Fire Dept.**

Forwarding correspondence from Howard Reiss, Chief of the Fairview Fire Department, in support of legislation regarding Lithium Ion Batteries.

COMMITTEE REFERRAL: COMMITTEES ON LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY

[2023-320](#) **COMM-Letter of Support-Lithium Ion Batteries Proposed
Legislation-New Rochelle Fire Dept.**

Forwarding correspondence from Andrew J. Sandor, Fire Commissioner, Chief of the New Rochelle Fire Department, in support of the proposed legislation on Lithium Ion Batteries.

COMMITTEE REFERRAL: COMMITTEES ON LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY

[2023-321](#) **COMM-Letter of Support-Lithium Ion Batteries Proposed
Legislation-Peekskill Fire Dept.**

Forwarding correspondence from James E. Seymour, IV, Chief of Department, City of Peekskill Fire Department, in support of proposed legislation on Lithium Ion Batteries.

COMMITTEE REFERRAL: COMMITTEES ON LEGISLATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY

ADJOURNMENT

LOCAL LAW INTRO. NO. -2023

A LOCAL LAW amending the Laws of Westchester County by adding a new Chapter 542 concerning the regulation of Lithium Ion Batteries.

BE IT ENACTED by the County Board of the County of Westchester as follows:

Section 1. The Laws of Westchester County are hereby amended to include a new Chapter 542 to read as follows:

**CHAPTER 542
REGULATION OF LITHIUM ION BATTERIES**

Sec. 542.11 Purpose.

Sec. 542.21. Definitions.

Sec. 542.31. Sale, Lease, Rental and Storage of E-Bikes and Electric Mobility Devices.

Sec. 542.41. Sale of Second Use Lithium-Ion Batteries.

Sec. 542.51. Posting of Signs.

Sec. 542.61. Public Education and Outreach.

Sec. 542.71. Promulgation of Rules and Regulations.

Sec 542.81. Enforcement, Violations and Penalties.

Sec. 542.91. No Private Right of Action.

Sec. 542.101. Severability.

Sec. 542.11. Purpose.

The purpose of this Chapter is to help prevent unnecessary fires and fire-related tragedies caused by the use and/or misuse of E-bikes and electric mobility devices which utilize lithium-ion batteries by prohibiting the sale, lease or rental of same unless it utilizes a properly graded, factory-installed battery. Damaged or unstable batteries and improper charging, storage or disposal can cause the batteries to overheat, leading to an explosive, aggressive fire that spreads rapidly, can reignite and is challenging to extinguish. As such, educating the public of the potential hazards associated with the use and storage of powered mobility devices as well as the safety measures which could mitigate those risks through the use of appropriate and required signage will allow consumers to make smarter and safer buying choices.

Sec. 542.21. Definitions.

- A. “Commissioner” shall mean the Commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Emergency Services;
- B. “County” shall mean the County of Westchester;
- C. “Department” shall mean the Westchester County Department of Emergency Services;
- D. “Director” shall mean the Director of the Westchester County Office of Weights and Measures-Consumer Protection;
- E. “Office” shall mean the Westchester County Office of Weights and Measures-Consumer Protection;
- F. “Code” shall mean the County of Westchester Consumer Protection Code;
- G. “Consumer” shall have the definition set forth in Section 542.11 of the County Consumer Protection Code;
- H. “Person” shall include without limitation any individual, firm, association, joint venture, co-partnership, group or corporation or any other legal entity or combination of entities whatsoever;
- I. “Retail Store” shall have the same meaning as set forth in Section 863.11 (13) of the County Consumer Protection Code;
- J. “Lithium-Ion Battery” shall include, but not be limited to, a storage battery in which an electrical current is generated by lithium ions embedded in a carbon graphite or nickel metal-oxide substrate placed in a high viscosity carbonate mixture or gelled polymer electrolyte;
- K. “Second-use Lithium-Ion Battery” shall mean a lithium-ion battery that has been assembled or reconditioned using cells removed from used batteries;
- L. “E-Bike” shall mean a bicycle with electric assist as such term is defined by Section one hundred two-c of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law;
- M. “Electric Mobility Device” shall mean an electric scooter, as such term is defined by Section one hundred fourteen-e of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law, or any other device used for personal mobility that is powered by a lithium-ion or other storage battery. The term “Electric Mobility Device” shall not include e-bikes, powered wheelchairs, or other mobility devices designed for use by persons with

disabilities, or any vehicle that is capable of being registered with the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles.

Sec. 542.31. Sale, Lease and Rental of E-Bikes, Electric Mobility Devices and Storage Batteries for Said Devices.

A. No person shall distribute, sell, lease, rent or offer for sale, lease or rent an E-bike or electric mobility device unless:

1. The electrical system for said E-bike or electric mobility device has been certified by an accredited testing laboratory for compliance with one of the following standards:

- a. The Underwriters Laboratories (UL) Standards 1642, 2054, 2580 and 2849, 2271, 2272; or
- b. The International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) Standards 62133, 60086-4, 61960 and 62281; or
- c. The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Standard C18; or
- d. The Society of Automotive & Aerospace Engineering (SAE) Standards J2464 and J2929.

2. The Certification required in Subsection (1) above or the logo, watermark, or name of such accredited testing laboratory is displayed as follows:

- a. On packaging or documentation provided at the time of sale of such E-bike or electric mobility device; or
- b. Directly on such E-bike or electric mobility device.

B. No E-bike, electric mobility device or storage battery shall be required to display the certification or the logo, wordmark or name of such accredited testing laboratory as specified in Subsection (2) above if such E-bike, mobility device or storage battery:

1. Is being sold or leased used or second-hand by an individual; and

2. Does not include original packaging, or original printed materials or documentation.

C. No person shall sell, lease, rent, distribute or otherwise transfer ownership of any E-bike or electric mobility device with anything other than the manufacturer's recommended lithium-ion battery and charger.

Sec. 542.41. Sale of Second Use or Reconditioned Lithium-Ion Batteries

A. No person, shall assemble or recondition a lithium-ion battery using cells removed from used batteries;

- B. No person shall sell or offer for sale a second use lithium ion battery intended for use in a bicycle with electric assist as defined in section one hundred two-c of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law, an electric scooter as defined in section one hundred fourteen-e of the New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law or any other type of electric mobility device.

Sec. 542.51. Posting of Signs.

- A. Every Retail Store located in the County which engages in the sale, lease or rental of E-bikes and/or electric mobility devices shall not sell, deliver, lease or rent any such device to another person unless a notice is posted in the establishment where such E-bikes and/or electric mobility devices are displayed or delivered to the purchaser of same at the entrance of the establishment and in at least one additional area where sales occur conspicuously stating, in no smaller than 24-point type in bold print the following warning:

WARNING

Lithium Ion Batteries are a Fire Risk:

If improperly charged, reassembled, stored or disposed of there is a risk of fire or explosion.

- **Only use the batteries, chargers and cords designed for the device;**
- **Never charge a device on a bed, couch, or upholstered furniture, in direct sunlight or in an exit pathway (doorway, hallway, etc.);**
- **Stop using the battery if you notice too much heat, smoke, an odor, sounds or change in shape.**

- B. The Department shall produce and make available to any Retail Store located in the County which engages in the sale, lease or rental of E-bikes and/or electric mobility devices, signs conforming to the requirements of this section.
- C. Failure to post said sign shall be a violation of this Chapter.

Sec. 542.61. Public Education and Outreach.

- A. The Department shall develop an informational campaign to educate the public about the fire and safety risks posed by lithium ion batteries and the safety measures that can mitigate such risks. Such campaign shall address both commercial and personal use of said devices.
- B. The informational campaign required by Subdivision (A) above may include, but may not be limited to: the preparation and creation of handouts, video and social media content, public service announcements and presentation at public forums;

- C. The Department may coordinate its efforts in achieving the campaign outlined in Subsections (A) and (B) above with any and all County Departments, public agencies, not-for-profit organizations, regulatory agencies, municipalities and local fire districts and departments.
- D. The Department may also utilize its fire inspectors, along with local fire chiefs, to conduct site visits throughout the County in an effort to educate the public and increase awareness of the potential dangers associated with the use of lithium ion batteries, and to insure compliance with the various provisions herein.

Sec. 542.71. Promulgation of Rules and Regulations.

The Commissioner is authorized to promulgate such rules and regulations as may become necessary to effectuate the provisions of this local law.

Sec 542.81. Enforcement, Violations and Penalties.

The County Department of Weights and Measures – Consumer Protection shall have jurisdiction to enforce the provisions of this Chapter. The prosecution and punishment of violations hereunder shall be in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 182 and Chapter 277, Article VIII, of the Laws of Westchester County, as such provisions now exist or as they may hereafter be amended, or pursuant to any successor laws to these provisions.

Sec. 542.91. No Private Right of Action.

This local law does not create a private right of action against any Retail Store in the County.

Sec. 542.10. Severability.

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or part of this local law or the application thereof to any person, individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity, or circumstance shall be adjudged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid or unconstitutional, such order or judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remainder thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section or part of this local law, or in its application to the person, individual, corporation, firm, partnership, entity, or circumstance directly involved in the controversy in which such order or judgment shall be rendered.

§2. This local law shall take effect 60 days after final adoption.

George Latimer
County Executive

Office of the County Executive

July 19, 2023

Westchester County Board of Legislators
County of Westchester
800 Michaelian Office Building
148 Martine Avenue
White Plains, New York 10601

Dear Honorable Members of the Board of Legislators:

I respectfully request that your Honorable Board adopt the attached Local Law which would amend the Laws of Westchester County by adding a new Chapter 542 concerning the regulation of Lithium Ion Batteries. Lithium ion batteries power a vast and growing range of products, devices, and equipment, from laptops and smartphones to micro-mobility devices (e-bikes and e-scooters), electric vehicles, lawn mowers, power tools, and energy storage systems. As the use and prevalence of lithium ion batteries continues to grow, so does the public safety risk for residents and first responders who are called upon to mitigate the associated fire incidents and increased hazards of same.

Lithium ion battery fires can be exceptionally difficult to control. These fires can result in a chemical reaction known as “thermal runaway” which occurs when heat builds up faster than it can be dissipated. This causes a very rapidly expanding fire, as well as the release of toxic gases, and a possible explosion. These blazes generally require copious amounts of water to extinguish. Even when lithium ion battery fires appear to be out, the batteries can reignite days later due to the energy that remains trapped inside the damaged battery cells. According to the Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY) the number of lithium ion battery related fires more than doubled from 2021 to 2022. Specifically, in 2021 there were 104 related fires, resulting in 79 injuries and 4 deaths. In 2022, there were 216 related fires, resulting in 150 injuries and 6 fatalities. By mid-March of 2023, there were already 33 related fires, with 43 injuries and 3 deaths.

According to the market research firm, Allied Market Research, the global micro-mobility market is expected to grow from about \$40 billion today to \$215 billion by 2030, with much of that growth attributed to the boom in the sale and use of battery-powered electric devices. By 2023, roughly 40 million e-bikes are expected to be in use worldwide. Underwriters Laboratories (UL) states that “An incredible transformation of personal electrified transportation technology has taken place around the globe and shows no sign of slowing. More and more, light electric vehicles and personal transportation devices are populating worldwide markets.”

The proposed legislation would require that only regulated and graded lithium ion batteries be sold by retail establishments located in Westchester County and require every retail establishment located in Westchester County engaged in the retail business of selling E-bikes and electric mobility devices to post a

notice warning of the dangers of Lithium Ion Batteries. The notice shall be posted in such retail establishment in the area where such devices are displayed or delivered to the purchaser and in at least one additional area where sales occur conspicuously stating, in no smaller than 24-point type and in bold print, the following warning:

WARNING

Lithium Ion Batteries are a Fire Risk:

If improperly charged, reassembled, stored or disposed of there is a risk of fire or explosion

- Only use the batteries, chargers and cords designed for the device
- Never charge a device on a bed, couch or upholstered furniture, in direct sunlight or in an exit pathway (doorway, hallway, etc.)
- Stop using the battery if you notice too much heat, smoke, an odor, sounds or change in shape

The Department of Emergency Services will also be required by the proposed legislation to engage in an ongoing educational and informational campaign in an effort to mitigate the risks associated with the use, storage and charging of electric mobility devices, E-bikes and lithium-ion batteries in general. The Law would also permit the Department to utilize its fire inspectors, along with local fire chiefs, to conduct site visits throughout the County in an effort to educate the public, increase awareness of the potential dangers associated with the use of lithium ion batteries, and to insure compliance with the various provisions of the law. Finally, the Law also provides that the Director of Weights and Measures – Consumer Protection shall have the authority to enforce the provisions of the proposed local law in accordance with various procedures contained in the Consumer Protection Code.

A multifaceted fire safety and prevention program is most effective regarding the safe use, charging, storage, and disposal of lithium ion batteries. The proposed Local Law is designed to inform the public about the potential dangers of lithium ion batteries, as well as to help ensure the safe handling and use of such batteries and related devices. By requiring retail establishments to inform purchasers of the risks associated with lithium ion batteries, buyers will be able to make educated decisions about owning and storing devices containing such batteries and is a meaningful step toward promoting public safety and preventing fire hazards. Moreover, point of sale messaging has been a proven method of influencing a consumer's behavior in industries such as the tobacco industry, where warning labels have influenced the consumer to make smarter, safer and healthier choices.

In light of the aforementioned, I respectfully urge that your Honorable Board adopt the attached Local Law amending the Laws of Westchester County by adding a new Chapter 542 concerning the regulation of Lithium Ion Batteries.

Sincerely,



George Latimer
County Executive

GL/nn

TO: HONORABLE BOARD OF LEGISLATORS
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER

Your Committee is in receipt of “A LOCAL LAW amending the Laws of Westchester County by adding a new Chapter 542 concerning the regulation of Lithium Ion Batteries.”

Your Committee is informed that lithium ion batteries power a vast and growing range of products, devices, and equipment, from laptops and smartphones to micro-mobility devices (e-bikes and e-scooters), electric vehicles, lawn mowers, power tools, and energy storage systems. As the use and prevalence of lithium ion batteries continues to grow, so does the public safety risk for residents and first responders who are called upon to mitigate the associated fire incidents and increased hazards of same.

Your Committee is further informed that lithium ion battery fires can be exceptionally difficult to control. These fires can result in a chemical reaction known as “thermal runaway” which occurs when heat builds up faster than it can be dissipated. This causes a very rapidly expanding fire, as well as the release of toxic gases, and a possible explosion. These blazes generally require copious amounts of water to extinguish. Even when lithium ion battery fires appear to be out, the batteries can reignite days later due to the energy that remains trapped inside the damaged battery cells.

Your Committee is advised that according to the Fire Department of the City of New York (FDNY) the number of lithium ion battery related fires more than doubled from 2021 to 2022. Specifically, in 2021 there were 104 related fires, resulting in 79 injuries and 4 deaths. In 2022, there were 216 related fires, resulting in 150 injuries and 6 fatalities. By mid-March of 2023, there were already 33 related fires, with 43 injuries and 3 deaths.

Your Committee is further advised that according to the market research firm, Allied Market Research, the global micro-mobility market is expected to grow from about \$40 billion today to \$215 billion by 2030, with much of that growth attributed to the boom in the sale and use of battery-powered electric devices. By 2023, roughly 40 million e-bikes are expected to be in use worldwide. Underwriters Laboratories (UL) states that “An incredible transformation of personal electrified transportation technology has taken place around the globe and shows no sign of slowing. More and more, light electric vehicles and personal transportation devices are populating worldwide markets.”

Your Committee notes that the proposed legislation would require that only regulated and graded lithium ion batteries be sold by retail establishments located in Westchester County. The proposed legislation would also require every retail establishment located in the County of Westchester and engaged in the retail business of selling E-bikes and electric mobility devices to post a notice in the place where such devices are displayed or delivered to the purchaser of same at the entrance of the establishment and in at least one additional area where sales occur conspicuously stating, in no smaller than 24-point type in bold print the following warning:

WARNING

Lithium Ion Batteries are a Fire Risk:

If improperly charged, reassembled, stored or disposed of there is a risk of fire or explosion

- Only use the batteries, chargers and cords designed for the device
- Never charge a device on a bed, couch, or upholstered furniture, in direct sunlight or in an exit pathway (doorway, hallway, etc.);
- Stop using the battery if you notice too much heat, smoke, an odor, sounds or change in shape

The Department of Emergency Services will also be required to engage in an ongoing educational and informational campaign in an effort to mitigate the risks associated with the use, storage and charging of electric mobility devices, E-bikes and lithium-ion batteries in general. The Department may also utilize its fire inspectors, along with local fire chiefs, to conduct site visits throughout the County in an effort to educate the public, increase awareness of the potential dangers associated with the use of lithium ion batteries, and to insure compliance with the various provisions of the law. Finally, the Law also provides that the Director of Weights and Measures – Consumer Protection shall have the authority to enforce the provisions of the proposed local law in accordance with various procedures contained in the Consumer Protection Code.

Your Committee further notes that a multifaceted fire safety and prevention program is most effective regarding the safe use, charging, storage, and disposal of lithium ion batteries. The proposed Local Law is designed to inform the public about the potential dangers of lithium ion batteries, as well as to help ensure the safe handling and use of such batteries and related devices. By requiring retail establishments to inform purchasers of the risks associated with E-bikes and electric mobility devices, buyers will be able to make educated decisions about owning and storing E-bikes or electric mobility devices and is a meaningful step toward promoting public safety and preventing fire hazards. Moreover, point of sale messaging has been a proven method of influencing a consumer's behavior in industries such as the tobacco industry, where warning labels have influenced the consumer to make smarter, safer and healthier choices.

Your Committee is advised that the proposed Local Law does not meet the definition of an action under New York State Environmental Quality Review Act and its implementing regulations 6 NYCRR Part 617. Please refer to the memorandum from the Department of Planning dated January

12, 2023, which is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Legislators. Your Committee concurs with this conclusion.

Your Committee, after careful consideration, recommends the adoption of this Local Law.

Dated: _____, 2023
White Plains, New York

COMMITTEE ON

JSB-6-2-23

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

SUBJECT: Regulation of Lithium Ion Batteries

NO FISCAL IMPACT PROJECTED

OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT

To Be Completed by Submitting Department and Reviewed by Budget

SECTION A - FUND

GENERAL FUND

AIRPORT FUND

SPECIAL DISTRICTS FUND

SECTION B - EXPENSES AND REVENUES

Total Current Year Expense _____

Total Current Year Revenue \$ _____ -

Source of Funds (check one): Current Appropriations Transfer of Existing Appropriations

Additional Appropriations

Other (explain)

Identify Accounts: N/A

Potential Related Operating Budget Expenses: Annual Amount N/A

Describe: A local law amending the Laws of Westchester County by adding a new Chapter 542 concerning the regulation of Lithium Ion Batteries.

Potential Related Operating Budget Revenues: Annual Amount N/A

Describe: _____

Anticipated Savings to County and/or Impact on Department Operations:

Current Year: N/A

Next Four Years: N/A

Prepared by: Patricia Haggerty

Title: Sr. Budget Analyst

Department: Budget

Date: July 17, 2023

Reviewed By: 

Budget Director

Date: 7/18/23

RESOLUTION NO. ____ – 2023

RESOLVED, that this Board hold a public hearing pursuant to Section 209.141(4) of the Laws of Westchester County on Local Law Intro. No. _____ - 2023, entitled “A LOCAL LAW amending the Laws of Westchester County by adding a new Chapter 542 concerning the regulation of Lithium Ion Batteries.” The public hearing will be held at ____ .m. on the ____ day of ____, 2023 in the Chambers of the Board of Legislators, 8th Floor, Michaelian Office Building, White Plains, New York. The Clerk of the Board shall cause notice of the time and date of such hearing to be published at least once in one or more newspapers published in the County of Westchester and selected by the Clerk of the Board for that purpose in the manner and time required by law.



George Latimer
County Executive

Department of Emergency Services

Richard G. Wishnie
Commissioner

Susan B. Spear
Deputy Commissioner

July 7, 2023

Dear County Executive Latimer,

I write in support of your proposed County legislation regarding Lithium Ion Batteries. As one of the Deputy Fire Coordinators for the Cause and Origin Team at DES, I am very concerned about the increasing prevalence of devices with Lithium Ion Batteries. When these batteries fail it is in an almost explosive manner, creating extraordinarily high heat as well as a variety of toxic and flammable fumes, making these fires very difficult to control and civilians to escape. The significant increase in fires nationwide involving lithium ion batteries, including fatal fires, is only going to continue to grow, further endangering those in Westchester County.

Our Cause and Origin Team has responded to approximately one dozen fires over the past year where a lithium ion battery was involved as the cause of the fire and even more where it was affected by the fire. All of these cells need to be accounted for as they present a hazard to our fire investigators even after the fire has been extinguished, as heat damaged cells can fail later causing this hazard to exist until the cell is properly contained.

I appreciate the County taking action to help prevent Lithium Ion Battery related fires. The proposed County legislation to require safety standards for e-bikes and other mobility devices sold within the County, to prohibit the use or sale of reassembled or reconditioned batteries, to require point of sale warning notices, and to develop a public education and outreach campaign, will go a long way towards reducing the fire risk caused by these batteries in our community.

Further, the members of our Cause and Origin Team appreciates the County spearheading the efforts to create a battery disposal program. This will help provide the fire departments and local residents with a solution to the issue of proper, and safe, battery disposal.

On behalf of the Cause and Origin Team, we strongly support this legislation, and we are glad that Westchester County is taking a leadership role on this important and growing safety problem.

Sincerely,

James F. Cuffe
Deputy Fire Coordinator – Cause and Origin Team

The Westchester County Department of Emergency Services
4 Dana Road
Valhalla, New York 10595 Telephone: (914) 231-1860 Fax: (914) 231-1622



GUS SPEDALIERE
Fire Chief

Phone:
(914) 723-3430
Fax:
(914) 723-1064

GREENVILLE FIRE DISTRICT
Town of Greenburgh

711 CENTRAL AVENUE
SCARSDALE, N.Y. 10583



July 6, 2023

Dear County Executive Latimer:

I write in support of your proposed County legislation regarding Lithium-Ion Batteries. As the Fire Chief of Greenville Fire District, I am very concerned about the growing prevalence of devices with Lithium-Ion Batteries, and the potential they cause difficult to control fires. Such fires are especially dangerous because of the toxic fumes they generate and because they burn much hotter and faster than most other types of fires.

I appreciate the County taking action to help prevent Lithium-Ion Battery related fires. The proposed county legislation to require safety standards for e-bikes and other mobility devices sold within the county, to prohibit the use or sale of reassembled or reconditioned batteries, to require point of sale warning notices, and to develop a public education and outreach campaign, will go a long way towards alleviating the fire risk caused by these batteries in our community.

In addition, our local Fire Department appreciates the County stepping up to create a battery disposal program. This solves a significant problem faced by our department and by our residents.

We strongly support this legislation, and we are glad that Westchester County is taking a leadership role on this important and growing safety problem.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gus Spedalieri", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gus Spedalieri, Fire Chief
Greenville Fire District

F AIRVIEW
F IRE
D EPARTMENT

19 Rosemont Boulevard
Post Office Box 1680
White Plains, NY 10602-1680
Tel. 914-949-2828

Website: www.fairviewfire.org
Facebook: www.Facebook.com/FairviewFire
Twitter: www.Twitter.com/FairviewFire

HOWARD REISS
Chief of Department

Eryk Simmons
Theodore DiGilio
John Baker
David Primerano
James Malone Jr
Deputy Chiefs

09 July 2023

County Executive George Latimer
Westchester County
148 Martine Avenue
White Plains, New York 10601

Dear County Executive Latimer:

I am writing in support of your proposed County legislation regarding Lithium-Ion Batteries. As the Chief of Fairview Fire Department, I am very concerned about the current and growing prevalence of devices with Lithium-Ion Batteries, and their potential to contribute to or cause difficult to control fires. Such fires are especially dangerous because of the toxic fumes they generate and because they burn far hotter and faster than most other types of fires.

Our department as well as our neighboring departments have first-hand experience dealing with fires caused by or involving Lithium-Ion Batteries. In the early stages of fires caused by new technology we scramble to find effective avenues for suppression, overhaul, disposal and of course the creation of policy for safety for our firefighters. Your proposed legislation will be a great aid in addressing those objectives.

I appreciate the County taking action to help prevent Lithium-Ion Battery related fires. The proposed county legislation to require safety standards for e-bikes and other mobility devices sold within the county, to prohibit the use or sale of reassembled or reconditioned batteries, to require point of sale warning notices, and to develop a public education and outreach campaign, will go a long way towards alleviating the fire risk caused by these batteries in our community.

In addition, the Fairview Fire Department appreciates the County stepping up to create a battery disposal program. This solves a significant problem faced by our department and by our residents.

We strongly support this legislation, and we are grateful that Westchester County is taking a leadership role on this important and growing safety problem.

Very truly yours,

FAIRVIEW FIRE DEPARTMENT

Howard Reiss
Chief Howard Reiss

Andrew J. Sandor
Fire Commissioner
Chief of Department
(914) 654-2211
asandor@newrochelleny.com



Department of Fire
90 Beaufort Place
New Rochelle, NY 10801

City of New Rochelle New York

July 10, 2023

George Latimer, Westchester County Executive
148 Martine Ave.
White Plains, N.Y. 10601

Dear County Executive Latimer:

I write in support of your proposed County legislation regarding Lithium Ion Batteries.

As Commissioner and Chief of Operations for the New Rochelle Fire Department, I am very concerned about the growing prevalence of devices with Lithium Ion Batteries, and the potential they cause for fires that are more difficult to control. Such fires are especially dangerous because of the toxic fumes they generate, and because they burn much hotter and faster than other types of fires.

The City of New Rochelle has had at least five such Lithium Ion Battery fire events, in locations ranging from the back of a garbage truck, to the loading dock of Home Depot, to multi-family apartment buildings. The worst fire, in a multi-family building at 1 The Boulevard (two blocks from City Hall), resulted in the residents of the entire building being displaced for weeks.

I appreciate the County taking action to help prevent Lithium Ion Battery related fires. The proposed County legislation, which requires safety standards for e-bikes and other mobility devices sold within the County, prohibits the use or sale of reassembled or reconditioned batteries, requires point of sale warning notices, and develops a public education and outreach campaign, will go a long way towards alleviating the fire risk caused by these batteries in our community.

In addition, our local Fire Department appreciates the County stepping up to create a battery disposal program. This solves a significant problem faced by our department and by our local residents.

Andrew J. Sandor
Fire Commissioner
Chief of Department
(914) 654-2211
asandor@newrochelleny.com



Department of Fire
90 Beaufort Place
New Rochelle, NY 10801

City of New Rochelle New York

We strongly support this legislation, and much appreciate that Westchester County is taking a leadership role on this important and growing safety problem.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew J. Sandor".

Andrew J. Sandor, Fire Commissioner
Chief, New Rochelle Fire Department

**CITY OF PEEKSKILL
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

*James F. Seymour IV
Chief of Department*

*James Sniffen
Assistant Chief*



*Tel 914-737-2760
Fax 914-737-0330*

1141 Main Street
Peekskill, NY 10566

July 13, 2023

Dear County Executive Latimer:

I am writing in support of your recently proposed County legislation regarding Lithium-Ion Batteries. As the Chief of City of Peekskill Fire Department, I have seen firsthand the devastating effects associated with the improper use, storage and charging of devices containing Lithium-Ion Batteries.

Our experience here in Peekskill has ranged from the off-gassing of a Lithium-Ion battery used in a residential lawnmower, to a devastating apartment fire caused by the overcharging of an off-brand Lithium-Ion battery used in an e-bike. These two instances are not alone, and the expectation of our first responders is that these types of events will continue to expand. These incidents are especially dangerous to our firefighters and to our residents, due to the toxic fumes generated by these batteries and because of the velocity and ferocity in which these types of fires burn.

I, along with my entire department and city, deeply appreciate the County taking action to help prevent Lithium-Ion Battery related fires. The proposed county legislation to require safety standards for e-bikes and other mobility devices sold within the county, to prohibit the use or sale of reassembled or reconditioned batteries, to prohibit the use or sale of reassembled or reconditioned batteries, to require point of sale warning notices, and to develop a public education and outreach campaign, will tremendously impact in lightening the fire risk caused by these batteries in our community.

In addition, our department appreciates the County stepping up to create a battery disposal program. This solves a significant problem faced by our department and by our entire community.

The members of the City of Peekskill Fire Department strongly support this legislation, and we are glad that Westchester County is taking a leadership role on this important and growing safety problem.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James E. Seymour IV".
James E. Seymour IV
Chief of Department