

Fire Prevention Month 2025: CRR Line Up Briefing

- Goal: Level up our skills, knowledge, and leadership in fire prevention to better serve the community and set the standard in fire safety for the people we serve.
- Approach: During Fire Prevention Month, each shift will get a quick, focused Line-Up briefing on a Community Risk Reduction (CRR) topic highlighting trending issues or areas where we've seen gaps. These **five-minute drills** are designed to give your crew **real, actionable knowledge** you can use on the job and share with residents. Think of it as **sharpening your edge, protecting your community, and leading by example** — all in just a few minutes at Line-Up.
- Why it matters: Staying current on CRR topics reinforces our role as trusted leaders in the community, equips us to educate the public effectively, and helps us “walk the talk” by modeling best practices in fire safety.

The theme for Fire Prevention Week 2025 (October 5–11) is: **“Charge into Fire Safety: Lithium-Ion Batteries in Your Home.”** This campaign highlights the importance of **safe purchasing, charging, and recycling of lithium-ion batteries**, which power many of today's devices but can pose serious fire risks if mishandled.

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service partners with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) to promote these evidence-based safety messages. But here in Montgomery County, we take it a step further: we dedicate **an entire Fire Prevention Month** to educate our communities and reinforce these life-saving messages throughout October.

Key aspects of this year's Fire Prevention Month theme include:

BUY:

- Purchase products with lithium-ion batteries that carry a stamp from a nationally recognized testing lab such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL), which ensures that they meet safety standards.

CHARGE:

- Use only the charging cords and charging cables that came with the device or that are specified in the owner's manual.
- Only charge your devices on a hard, non-flammable surface.
- Avoid overcharging any of your batteries or devices.

RECYCLE:

- Recycle the device or battery responsibly at a designated battery recycling location.
- **INFORMATION ABOUT BATTERY RECYCLING IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY:** Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection has recently expanded its single-family residential curbside recycling program to include on0call recycling collection of electronic items and household alkaline and rechargeable batteries. See map below.

Data from both the Maryland State Fire Marshal and from MCFRS show that the number of lithium-ion battery fires is a growing and documented problem.

- **Recent state data:** The Maryland State Fire Marshal began tracking these incidents in April 2023. In the first seven months of tracking, 30 Lithium-ion battery related fires were documented across the state, 18 of which were in residential properties.
- **Montgomery County increase:** MCFRS has noted an increase in these types of fires. Throughout Calendar Year 2024, the county experienced 18 confirmed battery-related fires.

- **Wider trend:** There continues to be an increase in the number of and severity of fires that are attributed to Lithium-Ion or other rechargeable batteries. These fires are occurring throughout the County and are happening in residential properties, places of business, garages, and also in trash and recycling trucks and landfills.

This important discussion and direction about rechargeable Lithium-Ion Batteries might distract people from other, extremely important fire safety messages that we all must follow to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe:

1. **Maintain at least the required number of working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in your home.** You must have at least one working smoke alarm on every level of your home, and for many other homes you must also have a working smoke alarm inside each bedroom. Most homes must also have a working carbon monoxide alarm on each level of the home. Call 311 and request a free home safety check by the CRR Team to help you with this step.
2. **Have a Fire Escape Plan built around everyone's capabilities and that you and everyone else in your home have practiced.** A fire escape plan is actually multiple plans: Plan A, Plan B, and maybe Plan C. The key to all fire escape plans is to get out or at least get away from any smoke or fire and get at least one closed door between you and the smoke or fire. Then, when you are in a safe place, call 911. Your ability to get out depends on advance warning from smoke alarms and advance planning. Fire can spread rapidly through your home, leaving you as little as one or two minutes to escape safely once the alarm sounds. Pull everyone together and make a plan. You can call 311 and request a free home safety visit to help you with this step.
3. **Importance of a Home Meeting Place.** When a fire occurs, family members may exit a home through different doors or windows, especially if smoke or flames block a primary escape route. Having a pre-designated meeting place outside the home ensures everyone can

How do I recycle electronic items and household batteries?

Montgomery County, MD On-Call Recycling Collection Service for Electronic Items and Batteries for Single-Family Homes

Legend

- No County Collection
- Collection service is available - call 311 to schedule
- Collection begins week of November 3, 2025 (Silver Spring/Kemp Mill)
- Collection begins week of December 1, 2025 (Aspen Hill/Glenmont)

On-Call Curbside Recycling Collection Service for Electronic Items & Household Batteries (by Service Area)

0 2.5 5 10 Miles