

DHS DIRECTORS MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 5, 2023
TO: DHS Providers
FROM: DHS Office of the Administrator
SUBJECT: Gas and Lithium-ion Battery Powered Mobility Devices (Bikes, Scooters, etc.)

Fires caused by lithium-ion batteries have increased significantly in New York City (from 44 in 2020 to 220 in 2022). These rechargeable batteries have caused death, serious injury, and extensive property damage. The fires they start are extremely dangerous – water may not prevent them from burning and spreading, and fire extinguishers do not work.

DHS does not allow mobility devices (e.g., bikes, scooters, skateboards, unicycles, etc.) powered by gas or lithium-ion batteries inside any facilities within the DHS shelter network, with the exception of disability related mobility equipment (e.g., motorized wheelchairs) which would constitute a reasonable accommodation. Clients may have e-bikes or e-scooters or similar devices but must store them and charge them outside of the facilities in an outdoor setting. If a client attempts to bring into a facility within the DHS network a mobility device powered by gas or lithium-ion batteries or just the batteries used for powering such a device, it must be removed from the facility by the client or confiscated by staff. Note that it is illegal to dispose of gas or lithium-ion batteries in the trash or recycling bin. For information about safe disposal, see [DSNY - Batteries \(nyc.gov\)](#), call 311 and ask for the FDNY Customer Service Center, or email FDNY.BusinessSupport@fdny.nyc.gov.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for all you do to serve our clients.