

EPA Completes Time-Critical Cleanup at Warehouse

Morris Lithium Battery Site

Morris, Illinois

October 2022

For more information

If you have questions, comments or need more information about the Morris Lithium Battery Fire site cleanup contact these U.S. EPA team members:

For technical questions

Len Zintak

On-Scene Coordinator
312-886-4246
zintak.leonard@epa.gov

For general questions

Ruth Muhtsun

Community Involvement
Coordinator
312-886-6595
muhtsun.ruth@epa.gov

U.S. EPA mailing address:

EPA Region 5
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Mail Code: SI-7J
Chicago, IL 60604

On the web:

<https://response.epa.gov/morrislithiumbattery/site>

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has completed a time-critical cleanup at the Morris Lithium Battery site. On June 29, 2021, a significant fire erupted at a building where a large quantity of batteries, including lithium batteries, were stored. Lithium batteries contain a flammable electrolyte that can become pressurized when damaged causing them to rupture and catch fire. Additional items containing potentially hazardous materials including solar panels and waste electronics were also found at the warehouse.

During winter months, EPA conducted periodic site inspections to ensure the perimeter fencing, building fencing, and the tarped batteries inside the building were secured. EPA also conducted perimeter and neighborhood air monitoring during these inspections.

Since resuming the active cleanup in April 2022, EPA has consolidated and shipped over 388,000 pounds of batteries off-site for disposal in accordance with federal regulations. EPA also brought in an industrial vacuum unit to the site to remove the remaining soot and debris from the floor of the building. Workers removed over 700 cubic yards of fire debris that was also shipped for disposal off-site. Throughout the cleanup, EPA crews performed daily air monitoring around and inside the building during site work hours.

Because the building is structurally unsound, EPA will secure the site with fencing and caution signs. Following that final step, EPA's involvement with the site will be complete.



Superior Battery Warehouse after EPA cleanup

The table below is a summary of batteries and other waste EPA shipped from the site:

Batteries	Description of batteries
Lithium-ion	Rechargeable battery. Used in cell phones, laptops, power tools, etc.
Lithium Metal	Non-rechargeable, one-time use battery. Used in cameras, key fobs, calculators, water meters, hearing aids, medical devices, etc.
NiCad wet	Rechargeable battery. Used in emergency lighting, standby power, and uninterruptible power supplies.
NiCad dry/NiMH	Rechargeable battery. Used in portable power tools, photography equipment, flashlights, emergency lighting, hobby RC, and railroad applications.
Alkaline	General purpose, non-rechargeable batteries used in everyday applications such as flashlights, TV remotes, toys, radios, etc.
Sealed Lead-Acid (SLA)	Starting lighting and ignition power sources for automobiles, along with large, grid-scale power systems.
e-waste	Electronic components such as circuit boards in computers, TVs, small electronics, etc.



Drums of waste staged for shipment off-site