



Dangers of 9 Volt Batteries

Many stories have been published regarding the dangers of improper storage of 9V batteries. Because these batteries have both positive and negative post at the top of the battery it is easy for them to come into contact with a variety of material that can cause flow, heat and possibly fire.

This was the case in a 2013 house fire in Colorado that destroyed a home and a 2012 incident reported by a New Hampshire homeowner of a fire smoldering in his kitchen's junk drawer that he was able to extinguish on his own.

The incidents have led one of country's top fire marshals to issue an advisory about the proper storage of 9-volt batteries that is being echoed by firefighters across the country, including Grandview, MO, Fire Department Chief Chuck Thacker.



Thacker explains how a 9-volt battery can spark and fuel a fire, especially in the inviting environment of a household junk drawer.

"There's all the other stuff; car keys, whatever else in there," he said. "If the conditions get right, you touch something against the two contacts, then you could have a heating event."

The chief said it only takes one metallic object; something like a paper clip, key or bit of steel wool touching the battery's posts to fuel a fire. Thacker said he's never dealt with a 9-volt fire in his city. He hopes the warning will keep it that way.

Advice for storing batteries safely is both simple and cheap. Just put a piece of electrical tape over the top of the battery and over the post. Another cheap fix is put each battery in a plastic bag like a zip lock.

This YouTube video provides a good explanation of what can happen and how to avoid it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnVDayl-gwI>