

Battery powered hand tools

This guidance highlights some of the hazards associated with the charging of battery operated hand tools and the steps that can be taken to reduce or mitigate them.

RISK ADVICE LINE

Having read this guidance should you have any additional questions on this topic or other risk related matters, as a valued Ecclesiastical customer you can contact us through our 'Risk Advice Line' on 0345 600 7531 (Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm, excluding bank holidays) and one of our in-house risk professionals will be able to assist. Alternatively you can email us at risk.advice@ecclesiastical.com and one of our experts will call you back within 24 hours.

For queries about your policy cover or claims please contact your insurance broker.



Batteries eliminate the risks associated with electricity, but do come with their own requirements for safe use and handling.

A number of fires have recently occurred in maintenance and grounds workshops attributed to overheating battery charging units for power hand tools, when the charging units have been left on overnight or across a weekend when the premises are left unattended.

In order to reduce the risk of fires caused by charging equipment, the following measures are recommended:

- You should ensure that all equipment is regularly inspected and tested as part of your portable electrical equipment testing regime.
- Wherever possible charging of batteries should take place during the day when the premises are attended.
- You must only use batteries and chargers designed for use with the original tool manufacturer's system.
- Inspect your battery regularly for signs of damage, such as crushing, cuts or punctures. Do not use a battery that has received a sharp blow, been dropped or is in poor condition.
- The surface on which chargers are located should be level and be constructed of non-combustible materials.
- The area around the charging unit should be kept free from combustible materials.
- Consideration should be given to providing a specific battery charging bay constructed of non-combustible materials located at least 10 metres from any other building.

Further guidance

Further Guidance heading and include: Further guidance can be found in RC 61 Recommendations for storage, handling and use of batteries. This is available to download free from www.riscauthority.co.uk

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