

## Open Letter: Support E-Mobility Access by Adopting Safety Standards and Smart Policies

The e-mobility landscape in the United States — comprised primarily of e-bikes and e-scooters — is undergoing a significant expansion, fueled by advances in rechargeable lithium-ion batteries.

Many Americans rely on these e-mobility devices for their livelihoods. A UL Standards & Engagement report found that more than half of current e-bike and e-scooter owners purchased their device to support work-related tasks. For cities, e-bikes and e-scooters provide an affordable alternative to a car, reduce traffic, and play a critical role in achieving sustainability goals.

The benefits of e-mobility devices are clear; less clear, however, is how to mitigate their risks. As the popularity of e-mobility devices rises, so does the risk of fires caused by the lithium-ion batteries powering them. A report by UL Standards & Engagement found that more than half of e-bike owners (53%) and e-scooter owners (54%) are unaware that their devices are powered by lithium-ion batteries. Not knowing the power source creates an awareness gap that can increase the risk of thermal runaway, an uncontrollable state of heat that can result in fire or explosion if the battery is damaged, defective, counterfeit, or substandard.

Fear over e-mobility battery fires has resulted in restrictions or even bans of these devices. Reducing access is not the answer. We can make e-bikes and e-scooters safer and protect availability for consumers who want and need them. Incorporating standards into the design of e-mobility devices and the batteries that power them can significantly reduce the risk.

The New York City Fire Department reported 268 lithium-ion battery fire incidents that contributed to 150 injuries and 18 deaths in 2023. The fires prompted the city to pass legislation that went into effect last fall requiring all e-mobility devices, batteries, and related equipment sold or leased in the city to be certified to meet safety standards published by UL Standards & Engagement. In 2024 to date, NYFD has reported only one death from a lithium-ion battery fire.

Battery fires are not, however, a New York City problem. They are happening everywhere. Solutions must be in place to mitigate these fires wherever they occur.

We believe that incorporating safety standards will meaningfully lower the number of e-mobility battery fires, protect communities, and preserve consumer access to e-bikes and e-scooters. rather than bans. We ask that leaders at the local, state, and federal levels enact policies to safeguard their citizens from further tragedy.

Signed,



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