

TEMPLATE MEDIA RELEASE FOR RECYCLE YOUR ELECTRICALS' STOP BATTERY FIRES CAMPAIGN 2025

(Remove any copy in red before using)

How to use this press release:

- Information highlighted in yellow is to be edited and personalised by you with your organisation and relevant fire/ activity details from your area. Remember to delete the brackets and highlight afterwards.
- If you are using any of our stats from this media release, please make sure you reference Recycle Your Electricals as the source.
- Hyperlinks to Recycle Your Electricals' Recycling Locator must be kept in/included in the press release.
- Our Local Authority Partnerships Team is also here to support you every step of the way. Before publishing your release, please get in touch by emailing hello@materialfocus.org.uk to let us know what you're planning and see how we can support you!

[LA] CALLS ON RESIDENTS TO 'STOP BATTERY FIRES' & RECYCLE FESTIVE TECH THIS CHRISTMAS TO STOP SURGE IN BIN LORRY FIRES

OR

[LA] ORGANISES [PROJECT DETAIL] TO ENCOURAGE LOCALS TO RECYCLE THIS CHRISTMAS AS PART OF 'STOP BATTERY FIRES' CAMPAIGN

- As the UK lights up for the festive season this December, new research from [Recycle Your Electricals](#), released to mark the UK's most popular week for putting up Christmas decorations, has revealed the impact of these lights.¹
- Many fairy lights and other FastTech gifts (cheap, small electricals) are bought around this season, which unfortunately are then binned or incorrectly recycled. These battery-powered electricals are causing a surge of fires in the waste stream.

¹ **Opinium research conducted for Material Focus**, amongst a nationally-representative sample of 4000 UK adults. Titled Christmas FastTech, 25th - 28th September 2025.

- So this Christmas, [Recycle Your Electricals](#) is calling on the nation to help prevent these fires by instead recycling broken lights, batteries and other FastTech Christmas gifts.
- **[Local Authority]** is partnering with Recycle Your Electricals to help make it easy for **[REGION]** households to recycle their unwanted electricals and give old Christmas tech and other electricals a second life as part of the national 'Stop Battery Fires' campaign.
- Recycle broken and unused batteries and electricals using Recycle Your Electricals' [Postcode Locator](#). Just enter your postcode to find your nearest repair, donation or recycling point which has over 30,000 locations across the UK.

[DATE OF LAUNCH]

This December, **[Local Authority]** is working with [Recycle Your Electricals](#) to encourage **[REGION]** residents to join the 'Stop Battery Fires' campaign. The campaign sets out to encourage the recycling of broken lights, batteries and other FastTech Christmas gifts this festive season, as part of an effort to reduce the surge of battery fires in the waste stream.

The campaign comes as it is revealed that binned battery-powered fairy lights alone stretch to the equivalent of just over 7 Santa trips around the globe.²

The challenge is, many FastTech or light-up electrical items are powered by batteries which, if end up in the wrong bin, get crushed and damaged in bin and recycling lorries, and in waste centres, sparking dangerous fires that put our firefighters, waste workers and the communities we live in at serious risk.

The Recycle Your Electricals campaign has found that 1.1b of all types of electricals and 449.9m loose volatile batteries have been binned – each a potential fire waiting to happen.³ There were already over **1,200 battery fires during 2023-24, an increase of 71% in 2022** - with many taking place in bin lorries, waste centres and recycling

² **Christmas Research Lights research.** Methodology in ENDS.

³ **Opinium research conducted for Material Focus.** Battery Recycling research, 2nd - 5th April 2024 amongst a nationally-representative sample of 4000 UK adults. For more details, visit: <https://www.materialfocus.org.uk/?press-releases=over-1200-battery-fires-in-bin-lorries-and-waste-sites-across-the-uk-in-last-year>

centres as a result of batteries and electricals being binned or incorrectly recycled.⁴

Niamh McBride, Local Authority and Environmental Partnerships Manager at Material Focus, the not-for-profit behind the Recycle Your Electricals

campaign says: “When recycling any electrical item, if you can, make sure the battery is removed from the item. And then take your electricals and batteries to your nearest recycling point which you can find by searching up recycle your electricals and using our [Postcode Locator](#). Most importantly, never bin your old batteries and electricals - always recycle them separately from household recycling or rubbish, to keep fire services, waste crew and local communities safe.”

[INSERT PARAGRAPH ON BATTERY FIRES IN LOCAL AREA]

- Call out battery fires they have had in their local area – specific details to include location, length of fire, emergency service response, impact on local residents
- Praise those who put out the fire – reference specific services

[INSERT PARAGRAPH ON RECYCLING IN LOCAL AREA]

- Details on facilities where items can be recycled locally
- Where possible, details of local recycling activity/events. Information could include:
 - What projects / initiatives are you organising? E.g. Kerbside collection, local events etc.
 - When / where are the projects taking place?
 - How can local residents get involved?

[INSERT QUOTE FROM LA SPOKESPERSON - ideally a local Cllr]

- Comment on battery fires and how local initiatives are helping stop these
- Any existing recycling achievements
- Any recent recycling developments in the area

When electricals are properly recycled, we can also save valuable copper, lithium, gold and nickel being lost forever, with these precious resources reused and

⁴ Local authority research conducted by Material Focus - for full methodology see notes to editors.

recycled into new items including mobile phones, laptops, smart watches, clean energy and even medical equipment.

It's now easier than ever to recycle broken and unused electricals using Recycle Your Electricals' [Postcode Locator](#). Just enter your postcode to find your nearest repair, donation or recycling point which has over 30,000 locations across the UK. Visit [\[INSERT LINK TO LOCAL AUTHORITY WEBPAGE\]](#) for local recycling advice in [\[REGION\]](#).

ENDS

Report comprises:

- **Opinium research conducted for Material Focus. Titled Christmas Fastech, dated 25th - 28th September 2025.** A nationally-representative sample of 4,000 UK adults was weighted to be representative of UK adults (18+) on age and gender, region, working status, and social grade.
- **Opinium research conducted for Material Focus. Titled FastTech - State of the Nation 2025, dated 20 March - 30 March 2025.** A nationally-representative sample of 4,000 UK adults was weighted to be representative of UK adults (18+) on age and gender, region, working status, and social grade.
- **Opinium research conducted a study from 2nd to 5th April 2024.** A sample of 4,000 UK adults was selected to ensure a representative distribution across key demographic factors such as age, gender, region, and socio-economic status.
- Battery Fire research with local authorities. (Methodology below)
- Recycling information provided by Material Focus

Christmas Research Lights research methodology:

- Desk research to [Jackson's Nurseries](#), the most common heights of Christmas Trees in the UK are 5–6 ft (150–175 cm) and 6–7 ft (175–200 cm). We took an average of 6ft.
- Desk research from [Ideal Home](#) showed that 15m is the recommended length for a 6ft tree.
- Desk research from [Universe Today](#) showed the route around the globe was 40,075,017 meters.
- To work out the number of battery powered fairy lights, this took the total number of hanging/string/fairy lights bought in the last year from the Opinium research conducted for Material Focus, titled Christmas Fastech: 39,145,582.
- To work out the number of these lights that were battery-powered, we used the result from the same research that showed that 49.3% of light-up Fastech was battery powered.
- The calculation was then executed as follows:
 - $39,145,582 \text{ light-up fairy lights} \times 0.493 = 19,298,772 \text{ battery powered lights.}$

- o Battery powered lights x average length = $19,298,772 \times 15 = 289,481,578.9$
- o Total length of lights / length of route around the globe = $289,481,578.9 / 40,075,017 = 7.2$

Battery Fire research with local authorities methodology:

In 2024, Material Focus sent a survey to local authorities across the UK. Material Focus asked local authorities if they had experienced any fires caused by crushed or damaged batteries in the waste stream and any further details they could give. 77 local authorities responded to the survey, stating that 242 fires had occurred. This equates to an average of 3.14 fires per local authority area. This number was then averaged across the 382 local authorities in the UK to over 1,200 fires. Out of the 53 areas who responded to the detailed survey, 50 of those surveyed said that fires are increasing, equalling 94%.

About Material Focus and Recycle Your Electricals

[Material Focus](#) is a not-for-profit organisation whose goal is to stop the nation throwing away or hoarding all their old, small electricals. Material Focus is delivering the UK-wide [Recycle Your Electricals](#) campaign. The campaign is revealing the value hidden in electricals and is making it easier for us all to recycle and reuse the small electricals we no longer need by providing more recycling points as well as providing practical information on how households can reuse and recycle. The campaign is funded by producers of electrical appliances which pays for a range of activities, including communications, behaviour change activities, increased recycling projects and research. Ultimately the aim is to support actions that will help the UK increase the levels of reuse and recycling of waste electricals.

About [LA]