

What I remember from the incident:

I came home from flying and had a 4S lipo which needed to be brought down to storage charge. I have a charging station in my garage. I connected the battery to a charger, set it to storage and went inside the house for lunch. Around 45 minutes later I heard a smoke alarm go off. I immediately ran into the garage and saw flames coming from the workbench. I grabbed the powder fire extinguisher and with a few short bursts the fire was extinguished. I don't think it was more than 10-15 seconds since the battery exploded and a fire started.

I normally put a storage charge on my lipos after I fly and typically, they are near storage charge already, seldom below. In this case I knew that the 4S would be discharged to storage so I hooked it up to the SkyRC B6 Neo, saw "storage" (did I really?) started the process and walked away.

What in the world happened? Now that I've had time to think about it, I realize that almost certainly I forgot to hook up the balancing leads of the 4S and the last battery I had charged on that charger was a 5S. I confirmed that, since the charger survived the accident and still had "5S" in memory and there were no leads plugged into the balancing port.

Most likely I was charging a 4S with 5S settings, as much as I think that's impossible to do with a smart charger. I really don't know. In my mind it was a safe operation.

The explosion left hot pieces of battery embedded in the ceiling and set fire to material 1.5 meters away. What saved my garage was a smoke alarm installed above the charging station and a powder fire extinguisher on the wall in clear sight near the door.

Of course, following this incident, I have changed my battery charging habits and now do it on concrete. I have also ordered a dedicated battery discharger.

The bottom line is that ***the only safe operation is one where you never leave charging batteries unattended.*** I did not intend to be careless but became complacent and obviously did not double-check settings.

I hope my story will be a reminder to all to practice proper battery safety.

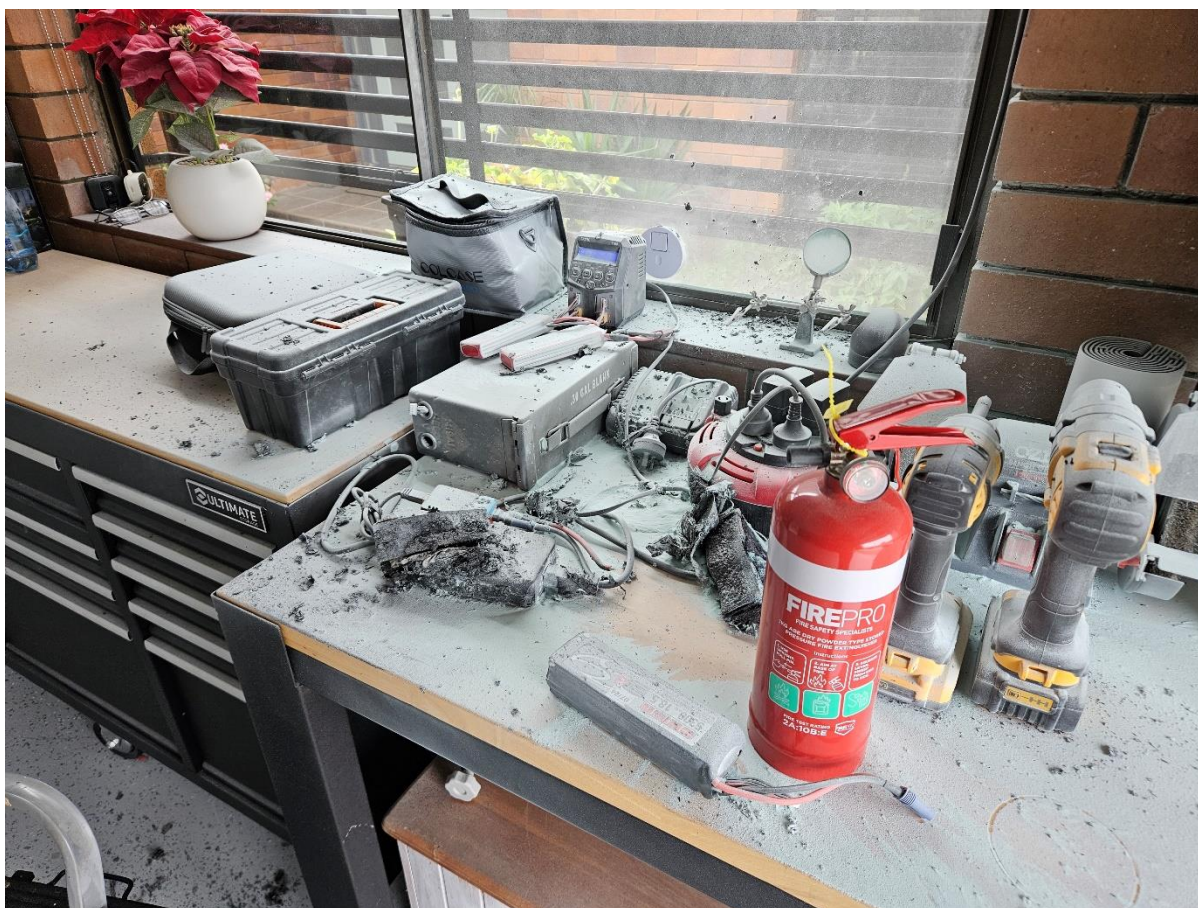
Happy flying,

Robert Goubitz

What was left of a 4S 4200Mah lipo



Not a safe setup, even for discharging



Battery pieces embedded in the ceiling above the charging station

