

NC Highway Closed as 3-Alarm Blaze Erupts at Lithium Battery Plant - Fire Officials Can Only Watch it Burn

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Jack Davis, The Western Journal

June 26, 2023

In the past year, lithium-ion battery fires in electric vehicles have led to blazing wrecks along highways that take firefighters hours to extinguish and buildings that go up like a torch from fires that cannot be swiftly brought under control.

And now, a plant that uses lithium to make components for batteries for electric vehicles has gone up in flames.

A plant belonging to the Livent Corp. was on fire early Monday in the North Carolina town of Bessemer City, according to [WCNC-TV](#) in Charlotte.

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The company said there were no reports of injuries and that all employees were accounted for.

The fire was declared a three-alarm blaze. Images from the scene showed firefighters not attempting to battle the massive flames, letting the fire burn itself out.

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Crews battle 3-alarm fire at lithium plant in North Carolina <https://t.co/4NII5oL0YI>

— KYOU (@KYOUTV) [June 26, 2023](#)

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BREAKING: A three-alarm fire at a lithium plant in Bessemer City broke out early Monday morning. <https://t.co/ryRBd8WpY1>

— WSOCTV (@wsoctv) [June 26, 2023](#)

Do you think you will ever purchase an electric vehicle?

The fire is in a building where solid lithium metal ingots are produced, according to a release [from the company](#).

NOW: A three-alarm fire is burning at the Livent Corp. Lithium Plant in Bessemer City. Gaston County has shut down the entrance to Hwy 161 South all the way to Kings Mountain Rd. [@MaryCalkinsTV](#) is live on that scene. Latest updates on [@WBTV_News](#). pic.twitter.com/vzufU3dBvB

— Mary King (@MaryKingTV) [June 26, 2023](#)

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Gaston County Communications said the fire broke out at about 1:20 a.m., according to WCNC.

The fire led to the closing of Highway 161 near the plant, the station reported.

Although no evacuation order was issued, residents near the plant have been told to stay indoors and not drive around roadblocks.

I'll bet this isn't good for our environment 😞

Lithium plant fire causes heavy smoke, road closure <https://t.co/uMaHfHbxVI>

— JT Retired Medic 🕊️🌊♀️❤️💉💉💉💉💉 (@Janaluwho) [June 26, 2023](#)

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As noted in a [CNN report](#) in March, after blaze in New York City that left six dead, with the rise of lithium-ion technology in transportation devices such as e-bikes, as well as electric vehicles, fires have offered new challenges.

“In all of these fires, these lithium-ion fires, it is not a slow burn; there’s not a small amount of fire, it literally explodes,” FDNY Commissioner Laura Kavanagh told reporters. “It’s a tremendous volume of fire as soon as it happens, and it’s very difficult to extinguish and so it’s particularly dangerous.”

Dylan Khoo, an analyst at tech intelligence firm ABI Research, told CNN that, “when a fire does happen, it’s much more dangerous,”

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CORRECTION, June 26, 2023: The Livent Corp. factory that caught fire early Monday in Bessemer City, North Carolina, is a manufacturing site for lithium ingots, a component of electric-vehicle batteries. An earlier version of this article described its product incorrectly.

This article appeared originally on [The Western Journal](#).