



BRANDON M. SCOTT

MAYOR

*100 Holliday Street, Room 250*

*Baltimore, Maryland 21202*

TO	Chairwoman Porter, Public Health & Environment Committee
FROM	Matthew Garbark, Director, Department of Public Works
DATE	April 8, 2026
SUBJECT	LO25-0017 Investigative Hearing – Zero Waste Committee Request #3
REQUEST TOPIC	What challenges (if any) have DPW experience for disposing of vape batteries or similar products?

---

### **Background**

At the second convening of the Zero Waste hearings, Councilman Blanchard remarked about legislation in Annapolis for tobacco products and discussed smoke shops and vapes. More specifically, Council Blanchard asked what challenges DPW has experienced during the disposal of vape batteries or similar products. He also asked for this information and any data regarding these challenges be provided ahead of upcoming hearings on March 19 and March 26.

### **Response**

Vapes and vape products are a growing volume for disposal and similar to other products with embedded lithium-ion batteries, pose a significant risk for fire throughout the collection, transport, and disposal processes.

DPW's Disposal Services experienced 3 fires attributed to electronics in 2025, one at the transfer station in a load of recycling, and two at the landfill from disposed batteries. DPW's residential recycling centers accept lithium-ion batteries for recycling in the electronics recycling program and alkaline batteries for disposal through our household hazardous waste program. We do not accept vapes or vape products through either program.

One of our goals is to increase and improve DPW's outreach and education around batteries, and to support industry and legislative efforts to provide safe disposal and/or recycling options for these products. The array of vape products on the market is expanding rapidly and resources for solid waste management are not available to support the need for collection that is safe for our workers and facilities.