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Supply Chain Pressures Spur Influx of Dangerous Counterfeit Power Tool Batteries

Manufacturers and trade association warn of online fakes; potential for danger

April 6, 2023—We’re all familiar with the saying, “If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is.” This sage advice definitely applies to those suspiciously lower-priced power tool batteries. The primary reason for the price disparity: the lower-priced battery is likely a knock-off, counterfeit, or unauthorized replacement battery. The Power Tool Institute (PTI), the power tool industry’s trade association, advises that the best and only way to avoid the potential dangers of counterfeits and knockoffs is to purchase, verify, and use only those batteries made by the tool’s original equipment manufacturer (OEM).

Knockoffs, counterfeits, and unauthorized replacements have always been present, but now scammers are leveraging vulnerabilities in the global supply chain and the public’s continuing need for new batteries to sell and distribute a wider variety of counterfeits or unauthorized replicas online. This has risen to such a level that the [FBI issued a warning](#) about these scams.

Knockoff or counterfeit batteries are unauthorized replicas of the real product, branded or advertised to work with the tools where OEM batteries would apply. These counterfeit batteries are often produced in the same or similar colors and with similar labeling as the OEM’s originals to confuse the consumer, particularly online shoppers. These batteries are often made of lower-quality components and do not stand up to the rigorous testing and certification process of OEM batteries nor are the batteries tested with complementary charger and tool..

Knockoff, counterfeit, and unauthorized replacement batteries pose numerous threats. They seldom meet the recognized standards the OEM batteries and tools go through, therefore can pose a danger to tool users. Knock-off and counterfeit batteries may lead to overheating and even cause fires or explosions, which can result in personal injury or property damage. This is in addition to the generally poorer battery performance, potential device damage, and/or complete product failure.

PTI recommends against buying power tool batteries online, except from the power tool manufacturer or an authorized retailer. Even national retail stores with an online presence can have third-party “marketplace” sellers, making it hard to discern OEM products from potential counterfeits or knock-offs.

For more tips from the Power Tool Institute on buying OEM batteries, visit <https://www.powertoolinstitute.com/pti-pages/battery-safety.asp>.

About PTI

With the vision to unify and educate others about power tools, since its founding in 1968, the Power Tool Institute (PTI) has established itself as the leading organization for building global understanding of power tools and for maintaining high standards of safety in the industry. Its members, a list of whom can be found [here](#), represent market-leading brands in the areas of portable and stationary power tools. PTI’s members are committed to improving the industry and to being the premier resource for power tool education. For more information, contact PTI 216-241-7333 or

pti@powertoolinstitute.com. On the Web: www.PowerToolInstitute.com and www.TakeChargeOfYourBattery.com.

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