



# Another lithium ion Vape pen confirmed to have killed St. Petersburg man, burning 80 percent of his body

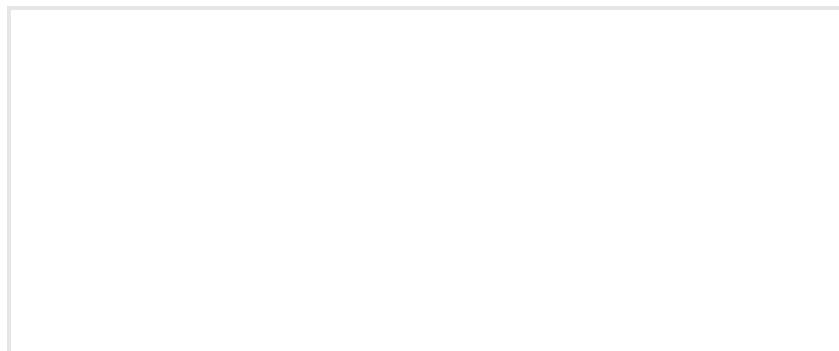
Tallmadge D'Elia was found dead Saturday, May 5, on the second floor of his St. Petersburg home.

Lithium ion batteries are the ones that are burning and exploding in Tesla automobiles

Author: Andrew Krietz

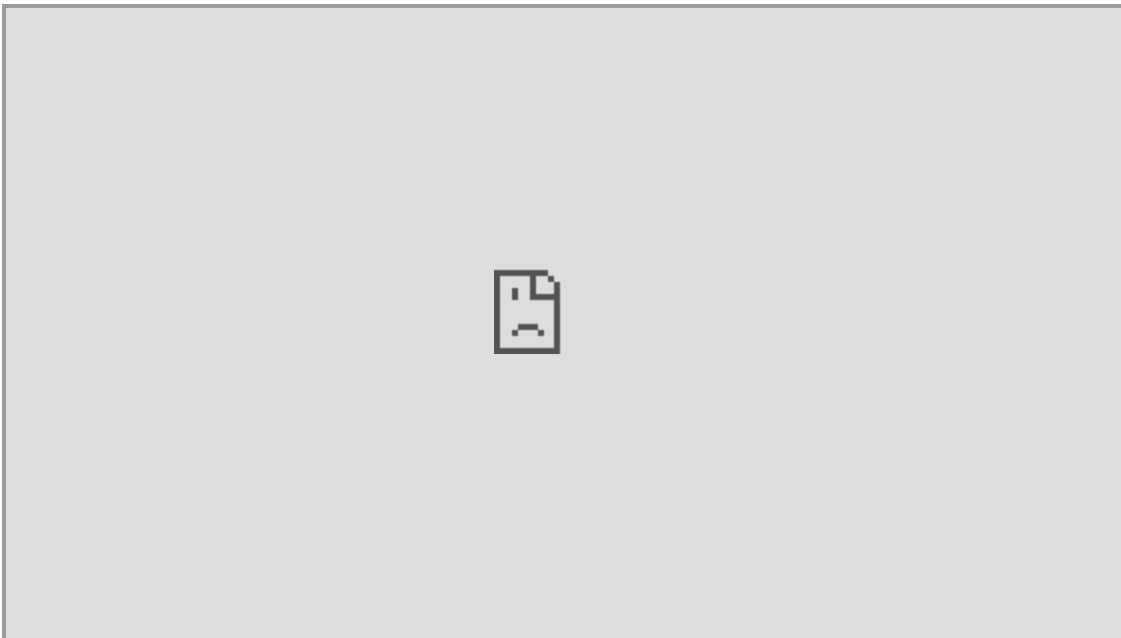
ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. -- An exploding lithium ion battery vaping pen killed a 38-year-old man earlier this month at his home, the autopsy shows.

The Pinellas County medical examiner confirmed the detail to 10News on Tuesday. [Firefighters had suspected it as the cause of death](#) since first responders were dispatched to the home on a call about a fire Saturday, May 5.





Tallmadge 'Wake' D'Elia was found on the home's second floor in the area of 300 19th Ave. NE.



Injuries to D'Elia's face indicated his e-cigarette exploded, burning 80 percent of his body, according to the medical examiner's report. Two portions of the device were recovered from the body, with the cause of death stated as "projectile wound of head," it reads.

The medical examiner said it was accidental.

**MORE:** [Vaping liquid can be deadly.](#)

**MORE:** [Smoking alcohol can be more deadly than drinking it](#)

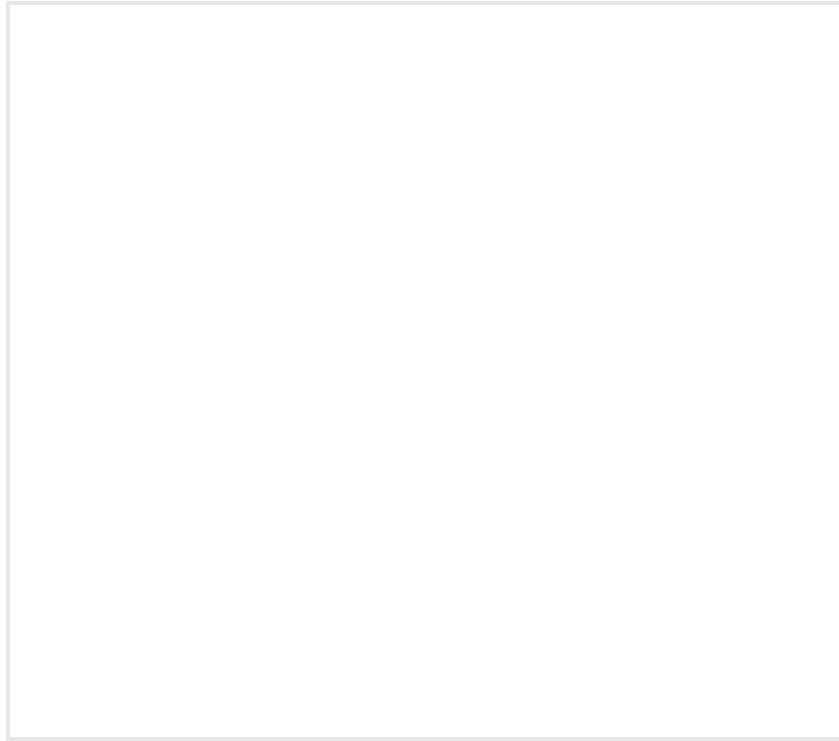
D'Elia spent much of his career as a television producer with CNBC before moving to St. Petersburg to freelance.

Exploding e-cigarettes and pens are extremely rare and most explosions center around the battery, but they happen enough to cause concern at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The federal agency recently put out a fact sheet with some safety recommendations:

- Never carry e-cig batteries loose in your pocket, especially where they might come into contact with coins, keys or other metal objects which can cause the battery to short out.
- Never use you phone or tablet charger. Use the charger that originally came with the device.
- Don't charge your vape device while sleeping or leave it unattended.
- Charge it on a flat surface away from anything that can catch fire. Don't charge it on your couch or bed.
- Always replace the batteries if they get damaged or wet.
- Always use batteries recommended for your device and don't mix and match different brands or mix old and new batteries.
- Never alter your device or disable the safety features like fire button locks or vent holes.

- Protect your vape from extreme temperatures by not leaving it in direct sunlight or in a freezing car overnight.



**MORE:** [Vape pen caused fire at DIA](#)