A Tesla Megapack burst into flames at ‘Victorian Big Battery’

A Tesla Megapack caught fire today during initial testing of a highly anticipated new utility-scale battery in Victoria, Australia. Luckily, there were no injuries or disruptions to the local electricity supply, CNBC reports. The blaze posed no risk of spreading to the nearby community, according to *Bloomberg*, but it did trigger a toxic smoke warning for residents who were told to stay indoors, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported. The cause of the fire is still unclear.

The fire affected the aptly named “Victorian Big Battery.” Spanning an area nearly as big as a football stadium, it’s one of the largest in the world. It’s scheduled to be operational by the end of this year, and the 300MW battery should be able to store enough energy to power more than a million homes in Victoria for half an hour.

That’s supposed to help prevent blackouts that have affected hundreds of thousands of homes in the region in recent years, especially in the summer when demand for electricity spikes. Giant batteries are also crucial to meeting environmental and renewable energy goals. The state of Victoria aims to get half of its electricity from renewable sources like wind and solar power by 2030. Batteries can fill in the gaps in energy supply when the sun doesn’t shine and winds don’t blow.

French renewable energy company Neoen is developing the Victorian Big Battery alongside Tesla and energy company AusNet Services. Neoen and Tesla brought another grid-scale battery online in 2017, which was the largest lithium-ion

battery in the world at the time. Neoen did not immediately respond to a request for comment from *The Verge*.

https://www.theverge.com/2021/7/30/22602411/neoen-tesla-megapack-fire-victorian-big-battery