

# Interim Guidance for Electric and Hybrid-Electric Vehicles Equipped With High-Voltage Batteries (Vehicle Owner/General Public)

## Electric and Hybrid-Electric Vehicle Considerations

### In the event of damage, fire, or flooding involving an electric vehicle (EV) or hybrid-electric vehicle (HEV):

- Always assume the high-voltage (HV) battery and associated components are energized and fully charged.
- Exposed electrical components, wires, and HV batteries present potential HV shock hazards.
- Venting/off-gassing HV battery vapors are potentially toxic and flammable.
- Physical damage to the vehicle or HV battery may result in immediate or delayed release of toxic and/or flammable gases and fire.
- A HV battery in a flooded vehicle may have high voltage and short circuits that can shock and cause fires.

## Vehicle Information and General Safety Practices

- Know the make and model of your vehicle.
- Review the owner's manual and become familiar with your vehicle's safety information and recommended safety practices.
- Do not attempt to repair damaged electric and hybrid-electric vehicles yourself. Contact an authorized service center or vehicle manufacturer representative for service.

## Crashes

A crash or impact significant enough to require an emergency response for conventional vehicles would also require the same response for an electric or hybrid-electric vehicle.

### If possible

- Move your car to a safe, nearby location and remain on the scene.
- Roll down windows before shutting vehicle off.
- Place vehicle in Park, set parking brake, turn off the vehicle, activate hazard lights, and move key(s) at least 16 feet away from the vehicle.

### Always

- Call 911 if assistance is needed and advise that an electric or hybrid-electric vehicle is involved.
- Do not touch exposed electrical components or the engine compartment, as a shock hazard may exist.
- Avoid contact with leaking fluids and gases, and remain out of the way of oncoming traffic until emergency responders arrive.
- When emergency responders arrive, tell them that the vehicle involved is an EV or HEV.

## Fires

As with any vehicle, call 911 immediately if you see sparks, smoke, or flames coming from the vehicle.

- Exit the vehicle immediately.
- Advise 911 that an electric or hybrid-electric vehicle is involved.
- As with any vehicle fire, do not inhale smoke, vapors, or gas from the vehicle, as they may be hazardous.
- Remain a safe distance upwind and uphill from the vehicle fire.
- Stay out of the roadway and stay out of the way of any oncoming traffic while awaiting the arrival of emergency responders.

## Flooding

- Remain a safe distance away and do NOT attempt physical contact with the vehicle.
- Immediately call 911 and advise that an electric or hybrid-electric vehicle is involved

## Post-Incident

- Do not store a severely damaged vehicle with a lithium-ion battery inside a structure or within 50 feet of any structure, vehicle, or combustible.
- Ensure that passenger and cargo compartments remain ventilated (i.e., open window, door, or trunk).
- Notify an authorized service center or vehicle manufacturer representative as soon as possible, as there may be other steps they can take to secure and discharge the HV battery.
- Call 911 if you observe leaking fluids, sparks, smoke, or flames, or hear gurgling or bubbling from the HV battery.

