

# Interim Guidance for Electric and Hybrid-Electric Vehicles Equipped With High-Voltage Batteries

## (Towing and Recovery Operators and Vehicle Storage Facilities)

### 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.
- **DETERMINE IF THE VEHICLE IS AN ELECTRIC OR HYBRID-ELECTRIC VEHICLE**, and if it is, advise Dispatch and all responders that an electric or hybrid-electric vehicle is involved.
  - Be alert. There is a potential for delayed fire with damaged lithium-ion batteries.
  - Consult with the responding fire department to determine the actions it took.
  - If you detect leaking fluids, sparks, smoke, flames, increased temperature, gurgling, popping, or hissing noises from the HV battery compartment, call 911.
  - **Notify an authorized service center or vehicle manufacturer representative as soon as possible as there may be additional steps necessary you or they can take to secure and, discharge, handle, and store the HV battery and vehicle.**
  - Notify the storage facility of your actions and the actions the Emergency Responders told you that they took.

**If you are properly trained and equipped, which includes using personal protective equipment, then consider the following:**

### Vehicle Shutdown and High-Voltage System Disabling

#### RECOVERING/TRANSPORTING VEHICLE

- **Call an authorized service center or vehicle manufacturer representative to determine additional steps that you should take to safely recover or transport the vehicle.**
- Always approach vehicle from the sides to stay out of potential travel path. It may be difficult to determine if the vehicle is running due to lack of engine noise.
- Place vehicle in Park, set the parking brake, turn off the vehicle, activate hazard lights, and remove keys to a distance at least 16 feet from the vehicle until loading the vehicle for transport.
- Refer to vehicle manual/recovery guide to locate proper attachment/connection points and transport method.
- Avoid contact with orange high-voltage cabling and areas identified as high-voltage risk by warning labels.

#### STORING VEHICLE

- Do not store a severely damaged vehicle with a lithium-ion battery inside a structure or within 50 feet of any structure, vehicle, or combustibles.
- Ensure that passenger and cargo compartments remain ventilated.
- Prior to placing and while located in storage area/tow lot, continue to inspect vehicle for leaking fluids, sparks, smoke, flames, gurgling, or bubbling sounds from the HV battery and call 911 if any of these are detected.
- Maintain clear access to stored vehicles for monitoring and emergency response if needed.

