**Electric Vehicles – General Hazards Toolbox Talk**

There are key hazards around electric vehicle use. Some relate to driving, the acceleration and lack of noise being two key issues, but the charging of vehicles at home can also introduce risks. Here are a few items to consider.

**Safe Charging Arrangements**

If you plan to charge your electric vehicle at home, remember these key points:

* Try not use an extension lead and certainly refrain from using extension leads that are not designed for external use.
* Never link extension leads to form a ‘daisy chain’ as this increases the risk of fire or electric shock.
* Check the vehicle charging cable for wear on a regular basis.
* Ensure that the wiring in your home is to a safe standard if you are plugging your electric vehicle into a 13A socket.
* You should attempt whenever possible to have a dedicated charging wall box fitted at home. The wall box should be installed by a qualified and competent electrician.
* If you plan to charge your vehicle at home and you don’t have a driveway, think about whether you’re going to cause a trip hazard with your charging cable.
* Cover the cable with a cable protector as it runs over the pavement. You owe a common law duty of care to pedestrians.
* Charging a vehicle is classed as using the vehicle so there is a possibility that the insurance cover for the vehicle would cover personal injury claims due to trips over charging cables.

**Electric Vehicles and Other Road Users**

Many commentators have suggested that the quiet operation of electric vehicles makes them less stressful to drive. There may be road noise but there is no engine noise. There are advantages and disadvantages to this.

* The advantage of this is that electric vehicles can make a journey less stressful
* The disadvantage is that pedestrians may not hear your vehicle, if they are looking the other way they could step out into the road in front of you. Always be wary when pedestrians and cyclists are in your field of vision and use appropriate speed for the road and conditions.

Electric vehicles can provide supercar acceleration. There is no lag so acceleration is immediate. This can catch out the inexperienced electric vehicle driver so be aware and gain familiarity with how your vehicle accelerates. Remember:

* The faster you’re accelerating the less time you have to react to events on the road ahead
* The faster you’re travelling the longer it will take you to stop if a vehicle pulls out or a pedestrian steps out into the road

**Key Points to Remember**

* If you’re charging your vehicle at home, please use a dedicated home charger if you can.
* Don’t use multiple extension leads to reach your vehicle if you don’t have a driveway.
* Be aware of your common law duty to prevent injury to third parties when your vehicle is charging.
* Remember the near silence and speed of your vehicle, they are two factors that can be a significant risk to third parties.

**Driver’s discussion questions**

1. What is the situation with home charging at your property?
2. Have you realised that your vehicle has instant torque and thought through how to control that?

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