Libreville electric vehicle safety

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WASHINGTON (Jan. 13, 2021) -- The National Transportation Safety Board issued four safety recommendations Wednesday based on findings contained in Safety Report 20/01 which documents the agency"s investigation of four electric vehicle fires involving high-voltage, lithium-ion battery fires.

Three of the lithium-ion batteries that ignited were damaged in high-speed, high-severity crashes, and the fourth lithium-ion battery fire occurred during normal vehicle operations. All three of the crash-damaged batteries reignited after firefighters extinguished the vehicle fires. The battery in the fourth investigation did not reignite.

Fires in electric vehicles powered by high-voltage lithium-ion batteries pose the risk of electric shock to emergency responders from exposure to the high-voltage components of a damaged lithium-ion battery. A further risk is that damaged cells in the battery can experience thermal runaway - uncontrolled increases in temperature and pressure - which can lead to battery reignition. The risks of electric shock and battery reignition/fire arise from the "stranded" energy that remains in a damaged battery.

The National Transportation Safety Board has an interest in the safety of emerging technology, including alternative vehicle fuel sources such as lithium-ion batteries. Safety issues with the high-voltage, lithium-ion batteries used in electric vehicles first gained widespread attention when a Chevrolet Volt caught fire three weeks after a crash test in May 2011.

The NTSB"s first investigation of electric vehicle battery fires on US roadways was in 2017, when a high-voltage lithium-ion battery caught fire after an electric vehicle left the road and crashed into a residential garage at high speed.

Between 2017 and 2018 the NTSB investigated two other electric vehicle high-speed, high-severity crashes that resulted in post-crash fires and one non-crash fire. During the course of its investigations, the NTSB considered the safety risks to first and second responders posed by the vehicles" high-voltage, lithium-ion batteries. Those risks are addressed in the NTSB"s Safety Report 20/01, "Safety Risks to Emergency Responders from Lithium-Ion Battery Fires in Electric Vehicles."

To report an incident/accident or if you are a public safety agency, please call 1-844-373-9922 or 202-314-6290 to speak to a Watch Officer at the NTSB Response Operations Center (ROC) in Washington, DC (24/7).

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pressure (thermal runaway), which can lead to hazards such as battery reignition/fire. The risks of electric shock and battery reignition/fire arise from the "stranded" energy that remains in a damaged battery.

Studies show that electric vehicles (EVs) are as safe as gas-powered vehicles. The different technology EVs use, however, can create different hazards, especially in winter. Employers and drivers can use our tool kit to understand and manage the risks.

When considering an EV for work, make safety a priority in your selection criteria. Be sure the vehicle is suitable for the intended tasks. Check crash ratings. Consider visibility, handling, and braking distance.

Most EVs have advanced driver assistance systems that can certainly help reduce crash risks. Get familiar with them and the alerts they generate. It"s important to understand that they are tools to assist the driver, not take over driving duties. The best safety system is an attentive and alert driver.

Here are some of the key considerations every EV driver/owner needs to keep in mind. If you"re an employer, make sure you review these points with employees when orienting them on EVs. The information will help them manage and reduce risks that may be new to them.

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