

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CRASHES AND FIRES: KEY SAFETY AND TRAINING TIPS

As electric vehicles (EVs) become more common on Nebraska's roads, incident responders face unique challenges when responding to EV-related crashes and fires. While EVs do not have explosive fuel tanks like conventional vehicles, they present different hazards — most notably, the risk of high-voltage battery fires, arc flash and thermal runaway. Although these incidents are rare, they require specialized response tactics and an understanding of EV systems.

KEY SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS



Battery Fires

Damaged or compromised batteries can lead to fires that burn hotter and longer than traditional vehicle fires and may reignite hours or even days after being extinguished.



High-Voltage Risks

EVs contain high-voltage components that can pose a risk of electric shock if not handled properly. Identifying an EV at the scene and understanding its systems are critical.



Scene Safety

First responders should avoid direct contact with damaged battery components and follow established protocols for immobilization, extrication and post-crash inspection.

TRAINING RESOURCES



Photo courtesy of Sacramento Metro Fire Department

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) offers free and low-cost online training for first responders:

- **[Alternative Fuel Vehicles \(AFV\) Online Training:](#)** Covers emergency tactics for electric, alternative fuel and hybrid vehicles.
- **[Electric Vehicle Crash Reconstruction Online Training:](#)** Focuses on safety during EV crash investigations and post-crash protocols.

Additional awareness-level training is available through organizations like the National Volunteer Fire Council and the National Alternative Fuels Training Consortium, with courses tailored for firefighters, law enforcement, EMS and tow operators.

REGISTER FOR TRAINING

It is highly encouraged to take advantage of these training resources to stay up to date on the latest safety protocols and best practices for EV incidents. Continuous training and awareness are key to supporting the safety of both responders and the public as EV adoption grows across Nebraska.

VOLUNTEER FIRE & EMS ENGAGEMENT IN 2025

This month's Fire School/Nebraska State Volunteer Fire Association (NSVFA) meetings featured discussion on the Nebraska TIM program, specifically how to engage NSVFA Area Representatives and Fire Chiefs in TIM efforts. Engagement opportunities included scheduling area TIM trainings and sharing Mutual Aid Meeting information so TIM can be added to the agenda. Thank you to NSVFA and its members for their support in enhancing TIM efforts and safety culture!

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM THE TIM PROGRAM IN 2025?

- Multidisciplinary TIM training sessions, with an emphasis on reaching volunteer fire partners.
- Evening TIM meetings to allow crews that responded to crashes we review to attend.
- Mutual aid meeting participation from TIM program representatives and other TIM coalition members.

Do you have feedback and/or are you interested in being a part of these initiatives? Contact our team at bobbi.brooks@nebraska.gov.

MAY STATEWIDE VIRTUAL MEETING

The Statewide Nebraska TIM Virtual Meeting was held on May 6, bringing together participants from across the state to share state and national TIM best practices, discuss resources and strengthen the statewide network of TIM champions. Recordings of each segment are available on [YouTube](#). Topics included:



AASHTOWARE SAFETY

The Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) is sharing a new crash data software called AASHTOWare Safety with their government safety partners for free. NDOT's State Safety Engineer Don Butler provided a demonstration of the software during the meeting. Attendees learned how to identify safety improvement opportunities and showcase features such as accessible crash data, data visualization with maps and metrics, searchable data filters, and polygon filters. Participants learned how to save and share data searches and were provided with contact information for requesting access: please email ndot.aashtowaresafetyadministrators@nebraska.gov.



WAZE FOR CITIES

A panel discussion covered the use of Waze for Cities, focusing on how local agencies can use Waze to provide real-time directions and close local facilities during incidents. The group reviewed how Waze enables agencies to edit maps to virtually close local roads, supporting detoured traffic to be routed appropriately. Local agencies can partner with Waze for free to indicate road closures, hazards, etc. from their computer, which updates the Waze app in one minute and Google maps within thirty minutes. Visit waze.com/wazeforcities for more information.



FLAGGER TRAINING

Flagger training and certification are essential for safe and effective two-way traffic control in shared lanes. Nebraska offers several options to meet these requirements: free online training and certification through ltap.unl.edu, in-person training and certification provided by NE LTAP, and the ability for organizations to designate their own in-house trainer and test administrator. Proper flagging training helps personnel manage traffic safely, maintain efficient traffic flow and reduce the risk of incidents in work zones and during emergency response.

NEXT STATEWIDE VIRTUAL MEETING - JULY 29

We invite you to participate in our next Statewide Nebraska TIM Virtual Meeting on Tuesday, July 29 from 10–11:30 a.m. CT/9–10:30 a.m. MT. Don't miss this opportunity to connect with TIM champions, stay updated on the latest TIM initiatives and contribute to ongoing discussions. Please register to attend [here](#). We look forward to "seeing" you on July 29!

Nebraska TIM: Safer, Together



Nebraska TIM Program | NE@TIM.hdrinc.com



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