

Electric cars, trucks, and other vehicles are an increasingly common sight on North Carolina roads, particularly in the areas around cities like [Raleigh](#), [Durham](#), and [Wilmington](#). In 2024, the most recent year for which total figures are available, the state logged more than 100,000 EV registrations, far exceeding the governor's goal of 80,000. The popularity of these vehicles continues to escalate for a variety of reasons.

But there is a potential problem that EV owners and other drivers on the road need to be aware of. Unfortunately, [car accidents](#) involving EV vehicles often result in much more severe injuries than in other auto accident cases.

Understanding the reasons can help drivers stay safer on the road. Essentially, the problems stem from the weight, torque, and technology of these vehicles. Drivers of other vehicles may be a greater risk than they realize.

## Why Weight is a Problem

Because of the hefty lithium-ion battery packs that drive propulsion, electric vehicles tend to weigh approximately 20-30% more than gas-powered vehicles of the same size. When a vehicle is heavier, it generates more force during the impact of a collision.

[Personal injury attorneys](#) have seen this effect for decades in [truck accident](#) cases. Even crashes involving relatively small trucks such as [delivery trucks](#) often lead to serious injuries because the heavier vehicle exerts such destructive force on the lighter vehicle.

Research has shown that when a vehicle that hits another vehicle is 1000 pounds heavier, the chance of the accident resulting in a fatality is 47 percent greater. Comparisons of many vehicle models shows that the electric version is at least 1,000 pounds heavier. For instance, a Volvo EX90 weighs about 1600 pounds more than a Volvo XC90. And the Chevy Silverado EV weighs approximately 4,200 pounds more than the comparable gas-powered Chevy Silverado 1500.

The drivers of electric vehicles often feel confident in the safety ratings promoted by manufacturers. However, they fail to realize that the heavier weight of their vehicles puts others on the road at greater risk of harm.

## Instant Torque Creates Rapid Acceleration

Gas-powered engines, which were the norm until a few years ago, take time to build up speed. Acceleration is gradual. But the motors that power electric vehicles produce instant torque, and that allows vehicles to accelerate at whiplash-producing speed.

Other drivers on the road may not anticipate these sudden bursts of speed. Disrupted expectations often lead to collisions. Even worse, many EV drivers take a long time to get used to the instant acceleration, and that can cause them to lose control or rear-end the car in front of them at stop lights or in heavy traffic. The rapid acceleration increases the severity of soft tissue injuries such as whiplash.

## Hazards to Pedestrians and Cyclists

EVs operate very quietly, particularly when traveling at lower speeds. These vehicles often catch [bicyclists](#) and [pedestrians](#) by surprise, and that can significantly increase the risk of accidents.

Evidence suggests that electric and hybrid vehicles may increase the risk of harm to pedestrians and bicyclists by 25 percent or more.

## Tech Hazards

The different technology used by EVs poses some unique hazards that the owners of these vehicles need to be aware of. When lithium-ion batteries suffer damage, they can undergo a self-accelerating chemical reaction known as thermal runaway. This leads to an uncontrollable increase in temperature that can trigger fires or explosions.

This can occur due to battery damage during a car accident, but it can also result from [defects in manufacturing](#), exposure to water, or improper charging. The battery system can also lead to [electrocution injuries](#) caused by exposed wiring, malfunctions in a charging set up, or damage to the batteries. When batteries are damaged in an accident, they can also leak dangerous chemicals that can lead to chemical burns or injuries caused by inhalation of toxic fumes.

## Understanding Liability for Auto Accidents Involving Electric Vehicles

EVs often collect and store complex data from onboard computers and driver-assist systems. This information adds a layer of complexity to car accident cases involving these vehicles. While the additional information stored in the

computer can provide information, it may make it hard to distinguish whether actions before and during an accident were directed by the driver or directed by automatic systems in the vehicle. It may be challenging to determine whether a manufacturing defect may be at fault or whether it was inappropriate actions of the driver that caused the accident.

If you've been in an accident with an EV, it is important for your [attorney](#) to act quickly to ensure that information in the onboard computer systems is preserved before it is automatically written over. If you are the owner of an EV involved in an accident, you need to be aware that this information has been recorded and could come to light in your case regardless of whether you were injured and are seeking damages or you are defending against an injury lawsuit filed by others.

## Safe Driving Habits are More Important Than Ever

We will probably continue to see more EVs and hybrids on our roads, so it is important to be aware of the risks posed by these heavy vehicles with the power to accelerate very quickly. If you're walking or riding a bicycle near the road, remind yourself that you cannot always rely on your sense of hearing to detect a vehicle that may be coming up behind you. When you're driving a car, imagine that electric vehicles on the road nearby are trucks that could prove dangerous, and give them extra space.

If you were hurt in an accident involving an EV, it is important to work with an attorney who understands how to make use of the information stored within vehicle systems to establish liability. At [Martin & Jones](#), we have extensive experience recovering and using tech info in car and truck accidents. We know that even when you take extra precautions, sometimes it is impossible to avoid being injured by the irresponsible actions of others.

For a free consultation to discuss the options for recovery after a car accident, call our team at 800-662-1234 or [contact us online](#) today.