

DELICATE VEHICLES: ELECTRIC CARS SCRAPPED FOR MINOR DAMAGE

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Between easily damaged batteries that can't be salvaged and a higher accident rate than petrol cars, electric vehicles may not be the boon to the Green Transition originally envisioned.

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Electric cars are being entirely scrapped for minor damages to batteries, according to a recent [report](#) from *Reuters*. Salvage and insurance companies say the vehicles, many brand new, are being junked in increasing numbers. This raises serious questions about the feasibility of EU Green Transition plans to replace regular fossil fuel vehicles with electric ones.

Even minor accidents can cause damage to the electric batteries and put the car's battery pack at risk of catching fire. As a consequence, very little risk can be taken with the e-cars once they are damaged.

At the UK's largest salvage company, Synetiq, where vehicles are broken down to resell the parts, the battery packs must be kept isolated in special storage because of the fire

risk. The owner [said](#) the number of vehicles has [soared](#) in the past 12 months, from 4 each day to 20.

While not frequent, battery fires, once they start, are incredibly hard to put out. A fireman [informed](#) *The Brussels Times* that the only way they can be extinguished is for the whole car to be placed in a water-filled container for several days.

Many batteries are not reusable. This is a serious issue for EU ‘circular economy’ ambitions— a [key pillar](#) of the bloc’s Green Transition plans. A damaged “battery pack is going straight to the grinder,” one American salvage company told *Reuters*. Even recycling the batteries involves either extreme heat or acid, processes requiring large amounts of energy and [creating](#) emissions or chemical waste.

Battery creation also causes CO2 emissions, and the average [estimate](#) is that an e-car must be driven 21,700 km before it does more good than bad to the environment—although in some cases this can jump as high as 126,655 km.

Since e-cars have an accident rate that’s [50% higher](#) than regular cars—200% higher for more powerful electric models—many vehicles and their battery packs are thrown away before they ever reach their break-even point, meaning they only do ecological damage.

While Germany’s attempt to switch to e-cars ran into [trouble](#) when the subsidies they relied on were reduced, the EU’s objective to ban fossil fuel vehicles by 2035 has now come under heavy [political opposition](#). In this light, the breakable and wasteful nature of e-cars will only add to the growing pile of doubts about the Green Transition.