

A Message From

Oak Hammock Administration

Sunday, November 10, 2024

Electric Vehicle Charging Update

Kevin Ahmadi, CEO

Hello Oak Hammock community,

In recent years, electric vehicle, or EV, charging has become a key topic of interest and discussion at Oak Hammock. This dialogue reflects both a commitment to supporting EV owners in their environmental efforts and an understanding of some residents' concerns about potential risks, particularly given that garage areas are located beneath residential units. Although fires involving EVs, like any vehicle fire, are rare, they can have implications for resident safety and Oak Hammock's infrastructure.

The Oak Hammock Residents' Council was asked to explore options to address these concerns, but no consensus was reached. Management has since consulted selected residents with EV knowledge and reviewed approaches taken by the University of Florida, other CCRCs and data from FLiCRA to see what similar communities in Florida are doing. Despite these efforts, a clear consensus on the best approach remains elusive.

The National Transportation Safety Board, or NTSB, provides data indicating that EVs are involved in approximately 25 fires per 100,000 sold, in contrast to 1,530 fires for gasoline vehicles and 3,475 for hybrids per 100,000 sold. This study, reported by Kelley Blue Book, suggests that EVs have a lower likelihood of fire involvement than gasoline-powered or hybrid vehicles.

Given Oak Hammock's unique parking setup, where spaces are integrated into apartment buildings and homes rather than in separate structures, resident concerns about vehicle fire risk are understandable. However, these statistics underscore that EVs present a lower fire risk than gasoline or hybrid vehicles, which helps address some initial concerns.

After considering various options and listening to resident feedback, management has decided to allow EVs to continue using the parking garages, with some prudent limitations. To preserve electrical capacity and ensure building safety, no new high-voltage 220V lines will be installed

beneath the buildings. Instead, residents with EVs may use nearby standard 110V outlets or have one installed that meets Oak Hammock's requirements, under specific conditions to ensure safety, aesthetics and fairness. For instance, any installation of 110V lines must be done through conduit, enhancing both fire safety and visual appeal. Oak Hammock will oversee the installation and ongoing maintenance, with associated costs to be covered by the vehicle owner.

Regarding electricity costs, which have been a topic of discussion among residents, Oak Hammock views this service as it would any other campus amenity. Much like water, heating and other shared resources, electricity is part of the comprehensive living experience we strive to offer. We are fortunate to have a community committed to reducing our collective carbon footprint, and we believe that supporting this initiative outweighs implementing a surcharge for EV charging.

Encouraging EV use aligns with our broader environmental goals and is a natural extension of the amenities provided to all residents, promoting sustainable choices without imposing additional financial burdens on those with EVs. We will continue to review each request and may limit the number of vehicles as we work with the community to identify additional charging stations outside the apartment garages to support more users, including guests, employees and those requiring faster charges. This additional system will have a higher voltage capacity and associated usage fees.

We are in the process of finalizing arrangements for implementation but want you to know that we are making progress toward our goal of providing a safe environment for all residents while also supporting the needs of EV owners. We hope to move forward quickly with this plan and will keep you informed of our progress. This is a plan that has been a long time coming, but we are excited that we are taking action that is forward-thinking and environmentally friendly. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

Sincerely,

Kevin Ahmadi

Kevin Ahmadi
CEO, Oak Hammock at the University of Florida