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Electric vehicles can explode. Petrol ones only do it in movies

FOR years I've told people until I'm blue in the face that electric cars don't have enough range, that they take far too long to charge up, that they will always be too expensive and that they aren't even very environmental.

Happily, people are now starting to listen, so it's time to move the argument along a bit with this: Electric cars are also bloody dangerous.

As I write, a massive ship is on fire off the Dutch coast and one person has died.

No one knows for sure what caused it, but it was carrying 25 electric cars, and experts say it's likely that one of them had a faulty battery pack.

Earlier this month, much the same thing happened on an Italian car transporter in the port of Newark, New Jersey. Two firefighters were killed putting that out.

And then there was the Felicity Ace, which was carrying cars powered by lithium-ion batteries when it caught fire in the Atlantic Ocean and sank.

In total, there have been ten major fires on ships carrying electric cars in the past 20 years. And it's not like salt water is to blame. Because in the last five years, the



emergency services have been called out to 753 electric vehicle fires in the UK alone.

Last weekend the World Rallycross Championship at Lydden Hill in Kent had to be abandoned when a faulty battery pack destroyed the pits and burned out two Lancia Delta Evo E racing cars.

And it's not just cars. A safety charity announced this week that e-bikes have caused hundreds of catastrophic

house fires. People have died, and that's not surprising when you learn that a fully charged e-bike contains the same explosive energy as six hand grenades.

And to make matters worse, fires in electric bikes and cars are often very difficult to extinguish.

The electrical car that Richard Hammond rolled down a hill while filming for the Grand Tour burned for days.

And then, after the fire had died down, something in the battery pack called "thermal runaway" caused it to rear back up again. And this went on for weeks.

The fact is this. It's only a matter of time before an electric car bursts into flames on a cross-Channel ferry or in the Chunnel. Or in an underground car park.

Of course afterwards, the electric car enthusiasts will continue to say that petrol cars catch fire too (yeah right, happens all the time, especially in Hollywood films) and that electric cars continue to make sense.

True, if you're a weak-brained, bleeding-heart liberal.

Not so true if you're a child slave in Africa who works round the clock mining the cobalt all those electric car batteries need to work properly.