

Tesla wants to add tech that can detect whether a child was left behind in a hot car

August 25 2020, by Dalvin Brown, Usa Today



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Tesla CEO Elon Musk has announced playful features coming to the brand's range of electric vehicles, but it seems the company is exploring some next-level safety features too.

The automaker is working on a motion-detection device that could pick up if a child was left behind inside a hot car. The sensor would also enhance Tesla's theft protection system, and the brand is currently seeking approval from the Federal Communications Commission to market it, Reuters reports.

In the application filed on the FCC website, Tesla wants permission to market a "short-range interactive motion sensing device ... which could be integrated in passenger vehicle interiors."

The brand says the device "could be used ... to reduce the risk of pediatric vehicular heatstroke, protect vehicle occupants from injury through advanced airbag deployment and seatbelt reminders, and enhance theft prevention systems."

The application was filed on July 31, 2020.

To differentiate between adults and children in the car, the company's system would use radar imaging to assess [body size](#), Tesla said in the application. The radar could also detect a broken window or [vehicle](#) intrusion.

Children dying from heatstroke in cars, either because they were left or became trapped, has increased in recent years, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The safety agency said there were 52 hot car deaths in 2019 and a record 53 deaths in 2018. So far, there were 19 reported this year.

"The majority of hot car deaths—54%—happen because someone forgets a child in a car," the NHTSA said in a recent release.

It's unclear whether the FCC will approve Tesla's request, and how soon the company wants to add the features. Newer Teslas currently come

equipped with eight cameras and 12 sensors to support its driver assistance features. The automaker's [electric vehicles](#) receive improvements via over-the-air software updates.

U.S. TODAY reached out to Tesla for comment.

The automaker's CEO has been transparent about some of the changes he envisions for the brand's lineup. On Twitter, Elon Musk recently said that the cars will be able to emit elevator music through external speakers which were designed for pedestrian warning sounds.

He also said he would like for the cars' horns to bleat like a goat and make other untraditional noises.

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Citation: Tesla wants to add tech that can detect whether a child was left behind in a hot car (2020, August 25) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2020-08-tesla-tech-child-left-hot.html>

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