

Webasto and Filderstadtwerke don't let employees freeze

The Filderstadtwerke are converting workshop vehicles for field service to electric drives. In order not to let the employees freeze in cold months and still ensure the necessary range of the vehicle battery, they retrofit the Range Plus system from Webasto.

Gilching/Filderstadt – August 2, 2022 – Anyone who has ever driven an electric car in winter knows that heating the interior can quickly shorten the range of the vehicle. Despite new generations of batteries and battery management systems, this can be up to 35 percent. In addition, depending on where a van is used, the heat escapes again and again as a result of frequent door openings. In addition, the window surfaces allow vehicles to cool down quickly.

In order for the Filderstadtwerke to be able to implement their sustainable goal of an electrified van fleet with a clear conscience, they have now had a Mercedes-Benz eVito, which must be ready for use in all weathers for the maintenance and repair of the water network, retrofitted with a fuel-operated air heater from the parking heater expert Webasto plus a tank. This significantly reduces the load on the current-operated heating system in the vehicle. Additional thermal energy is introduced into the vehicle system so that the drive battery is available with its full capacity for the maximum range of the electric vehicle. HVO (fuel from hydrogenated vegetable oils) can be used as fuel to remain as climate-neutral as possible.

“We decided to install this additional heating system to ensure that our mechanics are always available, even over the weekend. When on call, the colleagues must also be able to park the vehicle on the side of the road in front of the apartment to be able to drive quickly and reliably to a burst pipe, for example, even in ice and snow. We are glad that in Webasto we have a partner at our side who opens up this opportunity for us,” says Markus Listl, Head of Technology at Filderstadtwerke.

If the vehicle also serves as a workplace, special rules apply. The German Social Accident Insurance Association (DGUV) writes in its Information Pamphlet 215-530, “Climate in the vehicle” on this topic: “In winter, it must be possible to drive wearing normal clothing. Thick jackets, gloves and scarves can interfere with driving and reduce the effectiveness of the seat belt.” With Range Plus, a parked vehicle can be preheated even without using a charging point; while driving, the air heater maintains the temperature.

Anyone who chooses an electric vehicle but cannot – or does not want to – forgo the safety and comfort of a permanent and reliable source of heat, while still achieving maximum range, can benefit from this. This primarily applies to so-called “minibuses” used for transporting patients, schoolchildren or airport and hotel guests, as well as vans that also serve as workplaces for parcel delivery drivers, traffic monitoring officers and service technicians.”

“We will further develop the usability of Range Plus so that heating is also possible flexibly in electric vehicles, even if the vehicle is not currently being charged from the power supply. Our goal is that trip plans need not be modified to make routes shorter in winter, and the people working inside the vehicles can do so in a pleasant and safe environment,” explains Uwe Trettin, Head of Application Development at Webasto.

The system was approved by an expert from a testing institute in accordance with §21 of the German Road Traffic Licensing Regulations (StVZO). During testing, attention was paid to robustness of the system in the event of a collision or vehicle rollover, for example. On the basis of this type report, straightforward final acceptance is performed for each retrofit application by a testing institute with technical service.

About Webasto:

The Webasto Group is a global innovative systems partner to the mobility industry and one of the 100 largest suppliers to the automotive sector worldwide. The company's offering includes in-house developed roof, heating and cooling systems for various types of vehicles, batteries and charging solutions for hybrid and electric vehicles, and additional services related to thermal management and electromobility. Among the customers of Webasto are manufacturers of passenger cars, commercial vehicles and boats, as well as dealers and end customers. In 2021, the Group generated sales of 3.7 billion euros and employed around 15,700 people at over 50 locations. The headquarters of the company, which was founded in 1901, is located in Stockdorf near Munich (Germany). For more information please visit www.webasto-group.com

Media Contact:

Webasto Group
Alice Röhler
Communications Manager
Phone: +49 89 8 57 94-5 26 62
E-mail: alice.roehler@webasto.com