



Electric Vehicles in the CBD – are you ready?

What should older buildings do about Electric Vehicle (EV) charging facilities? Does your Owners Corporation know what to do if a resident says they need to charge their EV?

As CBD residents, we have a vested interest in encouraging the transfer over to Electric Vehicles. Imagine our busy central city roads, full of smaller, quieter and pollution free vehicles. These vehicles are better for the environment, reducing our use of fossil fuels.

The rationale is that electricity can be produced far more efficiently with larger power stations and a distributed network of renewables. EVs tap into this supply and help to reduce the CO₂ that is responsible, to a large extent, for climate change.

A Google search on EV adoption rate shows forecasters having to accelerate their predictions from a year ago. Bloomberg, for example, are forecasting that EVs will constitute 54% of new car sales by 2040. The trigger is tumbling battery prices and that EVs have lower lifetime operating costs and they will be cheaper to buy than internal combustion engine cars in most countries by 2025-29. An obvious dampener to adoption in Australia is the lack of an adequate charging network across the country but this does not have to be a hindrance in cities where EVs can be charged overnight at home.

EVs are particularly suited to operation in the compact area around the CBD, especially for delivery vehicles, buses and trucks as well as for personal travel. Of course, our wonderful tram network has been electric forever it seems. How lucky that our forebears had the foresight to keep and maintain the tram network.

In your building, it only takes one resident or potential apartment purchaser to ask, “Do you have Electric Vehicle charging in the car park?”

There are quite a number of companies in Melbourne that handle all aspects of EV charging, from hardware supply, installation and most importantly, tracking and invoicing the apartment owner/tenant for the electricity used. Apartment dwellers want to have their own EV with its lower operating costs, almost nil maintenance and the convenience of charging overnight.

How does a building install EV charging?

1. The Owners Corporation (OC) needs to pay for a three phase, dedicated circuit running from the main building switchboard and terminated in a supplementary switchboard (usually) located at a single spot in the car park. This installation is not expensive and is the minimal infra-structure required to be supplied by the OC.
2. The apartment owner pays for a single phase 16A extension from the common supplementary switchboard to their car park where an EV Charging Unit is installed – usually on the wall. All individual connections are taken from the one switchboard in the car park.
3. The installer company will remotely monitor electricity usage and directly bill the apartment owner or tenant. They then reimburse the OC for electricity used by all EV charging outlets in the building.
4. The EV charging company maintains the equipment and organises all permits as required.



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The advantage of this scheme is that there are no ongoing costs to the OC. There is no requirement to chase up every owner/tenant that does not pay on time. There is no extra administration involved.

Electric Vehicle charging facilities installed in your building are an easy and effective way to portray an environmentally sustainable and technologically progressive image. Such facilities may even increase the perceived value of your building and by association, the value of your apartment.

