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# A Tesla crash killed 2 people in Texas. Authorities say nobody was driving - and the fire took 32,000 gallons of water to extinguish

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- Two people died in a car crash outside of Houston on Saturday after the Tesla they were in ran off the road.
- Nobody was driving the car, authorities told local outlets.
- CEO Elon Musk said Monday that the car was not operating under Autopilot.
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**T**wo people are dead in Texas after the Tesla they were riding in hopped a curb, crashed into a tree, and burst into flames, local outlets report. Authorities said nobody was driving the car.

The crash occurred on Saturday evening in Spring, Texas, a Houston suburb, when a Tesla traveling at a high speed failed to negotiate a bend and went off the road, local television station [KHOU](#) reports. Once the blaze was put out, first responders found the bodies of two men, one in the passenger's seat and one in the back seat of the Tesla, Harris County Precinct 4 Constable Mark Herman told the outlet.



© Scott J. Engle/Reuters First responders found one man in the passenger's seat and the other in the back seat. Scott J. Engle/Reuters

Judging by the physical evidence and their reconstruction of the incident, investigators concluded that there was nobody in the driver's seat at the time of the crash, Herman said.

"They are 100% certain that no one was in the driver seat driving that vehicle at the time of impact," Herman told KHOU. "They feel very confident just with the positioning of the bodies after the impact that there was no one driving that vehicle."

The deadly incident comes amid a new spate of Tesla crashes that may have involved Autopilot, the carmaker's advanced driver-assistance feature that comes standard on all of its new cars. Investigators haven't determined if Autopilot was switched on at the time of the crash.



© Scott J. Engle/Getty ImagesThe fire took four hours to put out because the Tesla's batteries kept reigniting, local media reported. Scott J. Engle/Getty Images

Autopilot automates some highway-driving tasks, but it doesn't make cars autonomous, despite its moniker. Tesla has come under fire for Autopilot's misleading name, which [critics say](#) overstates the technology's ability and invites drivers to misuse it. Tesla also sells a bundle of more advanced driver-assistance features called "Full Self-Driving Capability," which also doesn't make cars drive themselves.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is [investigating Autopilot's role](#) in more than 20 Tesla crashes, including multiple where cars [smashed into emergency vehicles](#) stopped on the side of the road. Tesla says drivers need to pay full attention when using Autopilot, but there's still room for owners to abuse the system, as evidenced by numerous videos of [people sleeping](#) in the driver's seat or pulling other dangerous stunts.

Tesla monitors driver attention by requiring that they keep a hand on the steering wheel while Autopilot is engaged - something a reckless driver could theoretically do from the passenger's seat. General Motors' [Super Cruise](#), on the other hand, uses internal cameras to track drivers' gaze and ensure they're looking at the road.

[It took firefighters four hours and 32,000 gallons of water to put out the blaze because the Tesla's batteries kept reigniting, KPRC reported. First responders had to call Tesla to ask how to put out the fire, according to the outlet.](#)

Tesla CEO Elon Musk said Monday afternoon that the car was not operating under Autopilot at the time of the incident and that the owner had not purchased the company's "Full Self-Driving" package. The FSD upgrade adds even more driver assistance features to a vehicle but does not make it autonomous.