



# Driver Profile

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## Saskatoon engineer makes calculated leap to EV ownership

By Jeannie Armstrong

It's not surprising that Mallory, a project engineer, took an analytical approach when shopping for a vehicle to replace her gas-powered Mazda CX5.

*"I wanted to spend less money on gas and maintenance, and always thought that EVs were interesting,"* says Mallory.

Positive feedback from her Tesla-owning sister gave Mallory a starting point for her research.

*"Because my sister had a Tesla, she knew the specs for her vehicle. I was able to look up other EVs online and find out how they compared to the Tesla,"* says Mallory.

After completing extensive research into a variety of EVs, Mallory decided on a 2024 Chevy Equinox EV, which she purchased new in November 2024.



### CALCULATING THE COST

*"The change to electric charging was easy. The Equinox came with a charging cord that could plug into a regular outlet but also could plug into a Level 2 charger if you had one at home,"* says Mallory.

She hired an electrician and paid about \$800 to have a 50-amp outlet installed in her garage. *"It's the same kind of plug you'd use for an oven,"* she explains. *"You just have to ensure your electrical panel has enough space."*

On average, Mallory charges her EV once a week in the summer and twice a week in the winter. *"My Level 2 charger will charge from 20 to 80 per cent in about eight hours. I don't usually let it go down to 20 per cent."*

Charging her EV at home has increased her utility costs by \$10 to \$20 a month, compared to spending about \$80 a month on gas for her Mazda CX5.

Her EV requires very little maintenance, also boosting the vehicle's affordability.

*"I don't have to get oil changes. It's basically topping up washer fluid and rotating tires,"* says Mallory.

### OVERCOMING RANGE ANXIETY

Primarily a city driver, Mallory does venture out on the highway several times a year to visit her parents who live in Regina.

When travelling to Regina, she usually plans for a quick charging stop in Davidson, located approximately 120 kilometres south of Saskatoon.

*“It’s the only place where you can access a Level 3 charger, the faster charger, between Saskatoon and Regina.”*

Mallory’s motto is better safe than sorry. *“I wouldn’t risk not stopping for at least a quick 15-minute top-up in Davidson in the winter, because I’m not sure how low the battery would get before I reach Regina.”*

After one close call, she built her own spreadsheet. *“It’s based on my vehicle’s efficiency, showing the distance I have to go, and where I need to stop and charge. I found the gauge isn’t a good indicator. It drops faster than the kilometres you’re driving,”* Mallory explains. *“Other factors that impact the vehicle’s range is the temperature, how warm you want to be in the vehicle and the speed you’re driving.”*

Mallory would like to see more chargers installed along Saskatchewan highways. *“If you’re driving through Alberta and B.C., there are more chargers. The infrastructure in Saskatchewan isn’t as good. We need more Level 3 chargers, every 80 to 100 kilometers, so drivers can feel comfortable and confident driving, especially in the winter.”*

## DO THE RESEARCH

Mallory is quick to recommend EV ownership.

***“There have been no issues with reliability. I think they actually perform better than internal combustion vehicles. The chance that your vehicle won’t start in the morning during the winter is pretty much non-existent.”***

She says the instant torque makes driving fun and the preheat function is an appreciated luxury on cold winter days.

Her advice for prospective EV buyers? *“Do your research. Don’t just look at range — understand battery size, charging speed and how efficiency changes in different conditions,”* says Mallory.

Take it from this engineer: going electric is a smart, calculated move.

For more information about electric vehicles, please visit [Saskatoon.ca/EV](https://saskatoon.ca/EV).

