



Driver Profile

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Why one Saskatoon driver says he's never going back to gas

By Jeannie Armstrong

For Saskatoon resident William, driving an electric vehicle (EV) is part of an environmentally conscious lifestyle he's been building for nearly a decade.

A long-time advocate for clean energy, William bought his first EV in 2017: a used Fiat 500e.

At the time, William was working in the solar power sector. *"I wanted to do something positive about climate change and reduce my greenhouse gas emissions."*

After hearing his employer praise his Fiat EV, William decided to buy one for himself. *"I liked it and sold my gas truck. I haven't looked back since."*

Since then, William has owned a Nissan Leaf and a Chevrolet Bolt. Today he drives a 2022 Tesla Model 3 Long Range, purchased new.

"Range was important to me, which is why I picked the Tesla Model 3. It was the longest-range vehicle in the price range I was considering," says William.

William's wife also traded in her gas-powered Nissan Murano for a Nissan Ariya. *"We're now an all-EV household,"* he adds.

PLUG IN AND GO

The couple charges both vehicles at home on a single Level 2 charger. Their garage was already equipped with the necessary breaker and circuit, making installation simple.

"There's almost never any competition for that one charger. I'll ask: 'I need to charge my car tonight, do you?' We just negotiate that," says William.

"Charging usually takes six to eight hours and I do that overnight. In the summer, it's about once a week; in the winter, about twice a week."

ADD UP THE SAVINGS

William appreciates the economy of driving an EV. He estimates that the cost per kilometre for electricity is one-third to one-quarter that of a comparable gas vehicle.

"Maintenance costs are also lower. There are no oil changes, no tune-ups," says William.

Beyond tires, windshield wipers and washer fluid, William's Tesla demands little attention.





PRAIRIE HARDY

William is quick to debunk the myth that EVs can't handle Canada's extreme winters. For the first two years of ownership, he parked his Tesla outside. "The car always starts," says William. He's since made room in his garage for the EV, which means he's not scraping windshields or brushing away snow. "Prior to this, all my electric vehicles were parked outside and always started."

Winter temperatures do reduce range, says William. "In the winter, I have to charge my EV twice a week, as compared to once a week in the summer. It's the same thing with a gas vehicle. You get much poorer mileage in the winter with a gas car."

HIT THE HIGHWAY

While the Williams drive mostly in the city, they do take the occasional road trip, with destinations including Ontario, British Columbia and Washington State.

Planning is part of the experience, but William says charging availability has never been an issue. "If I'm going to any city in North America, there are charging stations. I've never had to change my route."

On the highway, William stops every two to three hours to charge his EV. "I charge for 30 to 40 minutes," says William. "That's enough time to have a bathroom break, get something to eat, have a little stretch and check my emails."

ADVICE FOR THE EV-CURIOUS

William encourages prospective EV drivers to speak with current owners. "People who don't own electric vehicles often have the wrong understanding of their merits and limitations."

He directs people to the Sask EV Facebook Group, where 1,700 members offer real insight. Test driving various models is another must.

"They're great vehicles and a lot of fun to drive," says William. "In my experience, everybody who starts driving an electric vehicle says they're not going back."

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