



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).

