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April 22, 2015, 4:50 pm

Electric vehicles on Colorado roads soar, but charging is a challenge

By Mark Jaffe
The Denver Post



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The number of [electric vehicles](#) on [Colorado](#) roads has grown more than 150-fold since 2011 but it can grow a lot more, according to a study from the [Colorado Energy Office](#).

In 2011 there were 20 electrical vehicles, or EVs, in Colorado and by early 2014



Charging stations are seen as a key to more EVs on the road source: AP

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there were 3,100 EVs in the state.

Among Colorado’s 64 counties, 57 had at least one registered electric vehicle. Five counties accounted for about 63 percent of the vehicles, which included electric hybrids and pure battery-powered cars. Those top counties are:

- * Jefferson – 452 Evs
- * Boulder – 427 EVs
- * Denver – 387 EVs
- * Arapahoe – 369 Evs
- * Douglas – 319 EVs

Those 3,100 EVs produced a 5,922-ton annual reduction in carbon dioxide –when compared with what that number of gasoline-power vehicles would emit.

The average [EV](#) used about \$221 in electricity in a year compared with an average cost for gasoline consumption of \$1,310.

Who is the typical buyer? Someone between the ages of 38 and 78, earning more than \$100,000 annually, having a bachelor’s degree or higher and owning two vehicles.

The study, which was done for the state energy office by BCS Inc., an Arvada-based consulting firm, suggests various ways that the Colorado EV market can be enhanced, such as simplifying Colorado Alternative Fuel Vehicle Income Tax Credit, [the principal state subsidy](#) for EVs, and improving marketing.

One key is adding [more charging stations](#) – of all kinds around the state the study said.

The report holds up as examples the “electric highways” being built elsewhere in the U.S. The West Coast Electric Highway has charging stations stretching from Baja to the Pacific Northwest and beyond to British Columbia.

In [Tennessee](#), an electric highway is being constructed along

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“Colorado is uniquely positioned in the Rocky Mountain region, with a growing market of EV adoption near both the I-70 and I-25 corridors that would suggest the State, along with private partners, could take the lead in developing a network of fast-charging stations that would involve planning with surrounding states,” the study said. The criteria for such an electric highway would be:

- A station located every 25–50 miles
- All stations within 1/2 mile of the highway
- Safe and convenient access
- Parking spaces
- Restrooms and drinking water
- Shelter and lighting
- 480 volt 3-phase electric power supply
- Amenities (e.g., food and traveler information)

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Mark Jaffe writes on energy issues for The Post. He was an energy and corporate finance reporter for Bloomberg News and covered environment and energy for The Philadelphia Inquirer.

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