



## Utility Website Toolkit

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### Benefits of including electric vehicle language on utility websites

As electric vehicles (EVs) grow in popularity, customers look to their utility for information on charging and other EV programs. It is a great idea to use this opportunity to educate customers on EVs and develop EV programs to incentivize charging during off-peak hours.

This toolkit provides website content and ideas for EV programs that utilities can implement for their customers.

[MNCharging.org](http://MNCharging.org) is a website managed by Shift2Electric that connects users with utility websites to learn more about EV charging and charging with renewable energy. Users can select their utility from the drop-down menus and learn about programs specific to them. To ensure that all utilities have a landing spot on their website referencing EVs for users of [MNCharging.org](http://MNCharging.org) or users looking for EV resources on their websites, Drive Electric Minnesota has compiled content that utilities can edit and use.

### Where should an electric vehicle web page live on a website?

Information about EVs should be easily accessible and navigable from the home page. It should be one click away from the home page so that users do not have to search for information.

Depending on the website's layout, information on EVs could be placed in different locations, including the following:

- Under an *Environmental Stewardship* header
- Under a *Rebates and Programs* header
- Under a *Member Services* header
- Under an *Electric* header
- If the website is organized by *Residential* and *Commercial*, place relevant EV information under each area. In other words, residential programs and rates should be added to *Residential*, and commercial programs and rates should be added to *Commercial*. [Note: [MNCharging.org](http://MNCharging.org) can only link to one landing page, so be sure to link an additional EV page on the main EV landing page.]

## Examples of websites

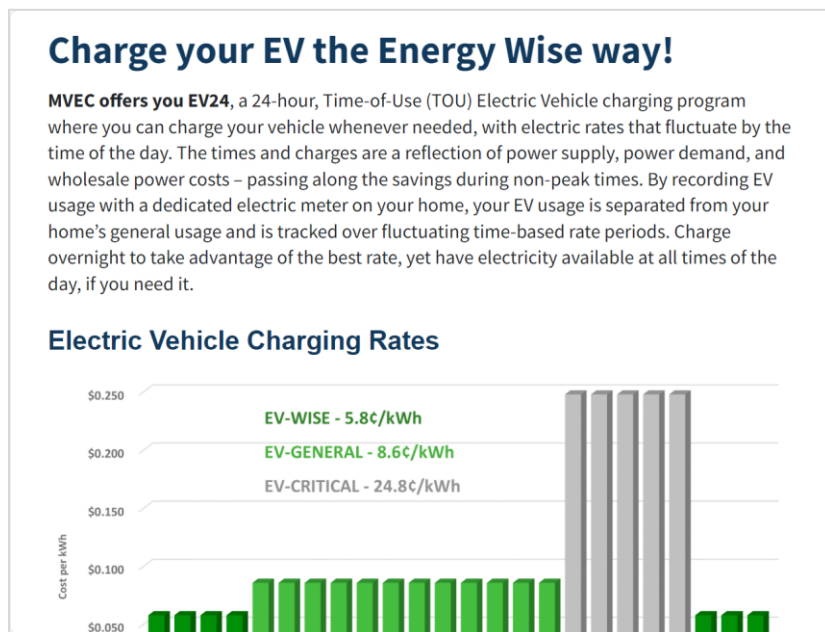
The following websites are good examples of EV web pages hosted by utilities across Minnesota. These websites explain EV programs offered to customers and members, education about EVs, or both. They are separated into the following three types of utilities:

- Investor-owned utilities: [Minnesota Power](#), [Otter Tail Power Company](#), and [Xcel Energy](#)
- Cooperatives: [Dakota Electric Association](#), [Lake Region Electric Cooperative](#), and [Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative](#)
- Municipal utilities: [Austin Utilities](#), [Elk River Municipal Utilities](#), and [Rochester Public Utilities](#)

Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative is one example of a great utility EVs page. It includes more than just an overview of their EV rate program. The website contains data that communicates the fueling cost difference between conventional vehicles and EVs as well as the benefits of using their EV rate.

They also briefly talk about the EVs they have in their fleet, along with additional resources customers can use if they are looking to buy an EV. The first section provides an overview of the utility's EV charging rate with a graph depicting the rates throughout the day, as seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Screenshot of Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative’s electric vehicle page



Reproduced with permission from [Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative](#).

Austin Utilities’ EV website primarily educates its customers on EVs and their benefits. It is a great example of an EV web page that educates its members about EVs and additional considerations involving purchasing an EV. In the EV charging section, the utility briefly talks about its actions to install EV charging stations in Austin, Minnesota, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Screenshot of Austin Utilities’ electric vehicles page


## WHERE CAN I CHARGE MY VEHICLE

Most of the charging happens at home because it is the most convenient and affordable way to charge. Public charging is available when you are on the road or if your workplace happens to provide workplace charging.

**CHARGING AT HOME** accounts for about 85% of all charging done by EV drivers. This is why it's important to understand the solutions available. Level 1 charging at home is available using a standard 120V plug and works well if you drive less than 30 miles per day. If you drive more miles than that, a Level 2 charger might be a better option for you. Level 2 chargers can charge up to seven times faster than a Level 1 charger depending on your vehicle type. They require a 240V source of electricity, like an electric dryer, so you may need to consult an electrician about installing a 240 volt supply near where your car is parked.

**CHARGING IN PUBLIC** can be Level 2 or DC Fast charging are usually used in public charging. To charge at a public charge station, you will need to know the type of charge station and plug available. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, there are currently more than 24,000 public electric vehicle charging stations across the country, and public charging infrastructure is growing rapidly. Drivers can use apps like the PlugShare Trip Planner feature to plan a road-trip with your electric vehicle and easily view all the best charging locations along the way. To check the availability in your area, visit these websites: Visit [www.afdc.energy.gov](http://www.afdc.energy.gov) & [www.plugshare.com](http://www.plugshare.com) to learn more.

**WORKPLACE CHARGING** Some employers provide electric vehicle charging to increase the convenience of driving electric. Visit this website for ideas on ways to encourage your employer to provide EV charging if they don't already. Visit [www.workplacecharging.com](http://www.workplacecharging.com) to learn more. [CLICK HERE](#) to view brochure on EV Workplace charging.



Austin Utilities has plans to install a network of EV charge stations in our community.

Reproduced with permission from [Austin Utilities](#).

These EV web pages are some examples of how to set up an EV resource page on your website. As a utility, the EV page could be an opportunity to talk about an EV program or

incentive offered to customers, an educational page on EVs and their benefits, or both. Click on the links at the beginning of this section to see different formats of EV web pages used by other utilities.

## Electric vehicle 101 website content for residential customers

The following text may be used to develop an EV web page to educate customers about EVs, charging, and available funding opportunities. It is primarily geared toward residential customers. The following information can be physically condensed on a website through drop-down menus, but any information about utility-specific programs should be displayed.

### Condensed version

Looking for more ways to save with an electric vehicle (EV)? You've come to the right place!

[Utility's name] is offering a [time of use/off-peak] EV rate for charging at home!

[Insert infographic of EV rate/comparing EV rate with general rate]

[Utility's name] is offering a [amount] rebate for buying and installing a Level 2 EV charger. Please refer to the rebate form for more details.

For any questions about our EV rate and rebate, please contact [name] at [email/phone number].

### *Electric vehicles*

Transportation is the leading contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in the US, and EVs offer greenhouse gas reductions even with the current power grid.

There are two kinds of plug-in EVs: battery electric vehicles (BEV) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV). There are also hybrid electric vehicles (HEV), which are fueled by alternative or conventional fuels but do not offer the same environmental benefits as BEVs and PHEVs.

Nearly all new BEVs today can travel over 150 miles on a single charge. Many can travel 200–300 miles before needing to charge. For even longer distance travel, PHEVs offer the comfort of a backup gasoline engine. [Note: If your utility has an EV in its fleet, you can add a section here talking about your experience with using and maintaining an EV.]

As of 2024, the market price of EVs is higher than that of comparable conventional vehicles, but incentives can bring down the cost. Go to [Drive Electric Minnesota's Electric Vehicle Incentives Database](#), which acts as a one-stop shop for information on rebates for EVs and EV chargers to see how much you can save. [Note: The incentives database can be embedded onto your website.]

EVs save you money over their lifecycle, [cutting maintenance and operation costs](#) compared to gas-powered vehicles. To calculate an estimated cost difference, use [Drive Electric Minnesota's Fuel Cost Savings Calculator](#) or visit [Energy Wise's Electric Vehicles page](#) to see how much you can save over time with an EV!

If you are looking to purchase an EV, check out these resources to find the right EV for you:

- [PlugStar Shopping Assistant](#): PlugStar has a guide to help you find an EV suited to your needs and wants.
- [Plug In America's Used EV Buyer's Guide](#): Plug In America gives tips for finding a used EV in good condition.
- [EV Sales Savvy](#): An online list of EV salespeople and dealerships recommended by EV owners based on their knowledge of EVs, the availability of EVs on the lot, and public EV chargers.

## Charging

Most EV charging takes place overnight at home since most single-family homes have an outlet outside or in the garage. The most common outlet is a 120-volt (V) outlet, which is compatible with a Level 1 charger. Level 1 chargers provide the slowest charge, adding 2–5 miles of range per hour. Many EV drivers opt for a Level 2 charger, which adds 10–50 miles of range per hour. Level 2 chargers require a 240V outlet and must be installed by a qualified electrician.

If you live in a multi-unit dwelling without access to an EV charger or outlet, you will either need to rely on public charging stations or talk to your property manager about installing an EV charger at your building. [MUDCharging.com](#) has tips on starting those conversations for renters.

There is a network of EV charging stations across the nation that are open for public use. If you need a public charging station, use [PlugShare](#) and the [Alternative Fuels Data Center's Alternative Fueling Station Locator](#) to find one. Many EVs are also equipped with onboard navigation systems that will help find public charging stations. **[Note: You can highlight local EV chargers available for the community in this section.]**

Workplace charging is also an option if your employer offers it as an amenity. Visit [WorkplaceCharging.com](#) for tips on how to encourage your employer to install EV chargers.

## Full version

Looking for more ways to save with an EV? You've come to the right place!

**[Utility's name]** is offering a **[time of use/off-peak]** EV rate for charging at home!

**[Insert infographic comparing EV rate with the general rate]**

**[Utility's name]** is offering a **[amount]** rebate for buying and installing a Level 2 EV charger enrolled in one of our EV-specific rates for its **[residential/commercial]** customers. Please refer to the rebate form for more details.

For any questions about our EV rate and rebate, please contact **[name]** at **[email/phone number]**.

### Why own an electric vehicle?

EVs have many positives, such as lower maintenance costs, lower fueling costs, and more efficiency. Despite the higher initial cost, they cost less to own over their lifespan and can be fueled at your home! Even if you don't have home charging available, there is a growing network of public chargers across the state and country. **[Note: If your utility has an EV in its**

fleet, you can add a section here talking about your experience with using and maintaining an EV.]

### *Types of electric vehicles*

Table 1 describes the different types of EVs and includes BEV and PHEV models that qualify for the federal tax credit.

**Table 1. Types of electric vehicles**

	Battery electric vehicles (BEV)	Plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV)	Hybrid electric vehicles (HEV)
Powered by...	A battery that stores the electric energy that powers the motor	An internal combustion engine and an electric motor	An internal combustion engine
How to charge/fuel	Plug into an electric power source	With alternative or conventional fuel or by plugging it into an electric power source	With alternative or conventional fuel
Examples	Chevrolet Bolt, Ford F-150 Lightning, Tesla Model 3 Performance	Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid, Ford Escape PHEV, Jeep Wrangler 4xe	Toyota Prius, Honda Accord Hybrid, Kia Niro Hybrid

Sources: "A Vehicle for Change," Drive Electric Minnesota, accessed February 1, 2024, <https://driveelectricmn.org/electric-vehicles/>; Fuel Economy, *Federal Tax Credits for Plug-in Electric and Fuel Cell Electric Vehicles Purchased in 2023 or After*, accessed February 1, 2024, <https://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/tax2023.shtml>.

Nearly all new BEVs today can travel over 150 miles on a single charge. Many can travel 200–300 miles before needing to charge. For even longer distance travel, PHEVs offer the comfort of a backup gasoline engine.

As of 2024, the market price of EVs is higher than that of comparable conventional vehicles, but incentives can bring down the cost. Go to [Drive Electric Minnesota's Electric Vehicle Incentives Database](#), which acts as a one-stop shop for information on rebates for EVs and EV chargers to see how much you can save. [Note: The incentives database can be embedded onto your website.]

EVs save you money over their lifecycle, [cutting maintenance and operation costs](#) compared to gas-powered vehicles. To calculate an estimated cost difference, use [Drive Electric Minnesota's Fuel Cost Savings Calculator](#) or [Energy Wise's Electric Vehicles page](#) to see how much you can save over time with an EV!

If you are looking to purchase an EV, check out these resources to find the right EV for you:

- [PlugStar Shopping Assistant](#): PlugStar has a guide to help you find an EV suited to your needs and wants.
- [Plug In America's Used EV Buyer's Guide](#): Plug In America gives tips for finding a used EV in good condition.
- [EV Sales Savvy](#): An online list of EV salespeople and dealerships recommended by EV owners based on their knowledge of EVs, the availability of EVs on the lot, and public EV chargers.

### Common charging station locations

**Home:** Many EV drivers charge their vehicles overnight at home since most single-family homes are equipped with a 120-volt (V) outlet that is compatible with a Level 1 charger either outside or in a garage. A 120V outlet is most common and is compatible with a Level 1 charger. Level 1 chargers provide the slowest rate of charge, adding 2–5 miles of range per hour. Many EV drivers opt for a Level 2 charger, which adds 10–50 miles of range per hour. Level 2 chargers require a 240V outlet and must be installed by a qualified electrician.

If you live in a multi-unit dwelling without access to an EV charger or outlet, you will either need to rely on public charging stations or talk to your property manager about installing an EV charger at your building. [MUDCharging.com](#) has tips on starting those conversations for renters.

**Public:** There is a network of EV charging stations across the nation that are open for public use. If you need a public charging station, use [PlugShare](#) or the [Alternative Fuels Data Center's Alternative Fueling Station Locator](#) to find one. Many EVs are also equipped with onboard navigation systems that will help find public charging stations. **[Note: You can highlight local EV chargers available for the community in this section.]**

**Work:** EV charging can be offered as an amenity by some workplaces and is often a Level 2 or direct current (DC) fast charger. For advice on encouraging your workplace to install EV charging stations, go to [WorkplaceCharging.com](#).

### Charging speeds

Table 2 compares the three main charging speeds. More information about charging can be found on [Drive Electric Minnesota's website](#).

**Table 2. Electric charger speeds by level**

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3 (DCFC)
<b>Power outlet</b>	120V	240V	25kW+
<b>Installation required</b>	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Miles per hour of charging</b>	2–5 miles	10–50 miles	160 miles and more

Source: Drive Electric Minnesota, *Charging Electric Vehicles 101*, accessed February 1, 2024, <https://driveelectricmn.org/charging/>.



## Incentivizing customers

If you are looking for additional ways to incentivize customers to switch to EVs, you can use some of these programs as inspiration. These programs can be added to an EV program with a specialized charging rate or to pay back the purchase of a smart EV charger.

### EV charging rebates

Many utilities across Minnesota offer rebates for purchasing and installing an EV charger. The most common rebate amount is \$500, but you can adjust the rebate amount as you see fit. For more examples of utility-offered rebates, visit [Drive Electric Minnesota's Electric Vehicle Incentives Database](#).

### EV owners club

An EV owners club is a great way to connect with fellow EV owners and gain input from them. To encourage membership, you can offer a small incentive to join. [Austin Public Utilities](#) has an EV owners club where their customers can receive information on new EV rates and programs, with opportunities for members to participate in different events.

### EV surveys

A survey is a great way to figure out how many EVs are in your service area, and you can offer an incentive to EV owners who complete the survey. The survey can be part of an entry point for an EV owners club or used to create an EV rate or charging rebate.

Some questions you could ask:

- What kind of EV do you drive?
  - Type: BEV, PHEV
  - Model
  - Year
- Where do you primarily charge your EV?
- When do you primarily charge your EV?
- How often do you charge your EV?
- With what kind of EV charger do you primarily charge?
- Would you be interested in enrolling in an EV utility rate?

## Contact us

If you have any questions about this toolkit, please get in touch with us at [driveelectricmn@gpisd.net](mailto:driveelectricmn@gpisd.net).