

GREENWIRE

Auto emissions hit record low, EPA reports

Although the latest annual EPA report shows progress, green groups want to see stronger standards.

However, some companies relied on credits and “loopholes,” said Dan Becker, director of the Center for Biological Diversity’s Safe Climate Transport Campaign, in a statement.

“Auto companies claim they’re leading the charge for electric vehicles, but the EPA’s report shows they’re spouting hogwash along with pollution,” Becker said.

To accelerate reducing emissions in the auto industry, the Biden administration should strengthen draft rules to cut pollution and require greater production of EVs, he said.

“Automakers won’t slash pollution and improve gas mileage unless strong standards make them do so,” Becker said.

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While a new EPA automotive report shows progress in curbing emissions, green groups argue automakers need to go further.

U.S. fuel economy is at a record high while emissions have reached a new low, according to the latest annual EPA Automotive Trends Report. The improvements are largely due to increased electric vehicle production, although there was some improvement in fuel efficiency.

“We are thrilled to see manufacturers continue to innovate and develop technologies in multiple vehicle categories that have led to a substantial increase in miles per gallon, passing cost savings onto families across the nation,” said EPA Administrator Michael Regan in a release.

The average estimated carbon emission rate for all new vehicles dropped by 3 percent to a record low, according to the report.

From model year 2021-22, average fuel economy increased by 0.6 mile per gallon. Most vehicle types are also at their record-best fuel economy.

These records also mark the largest annual improvement in the last nine years. Since model year 2004, emissions have dropped 27 percent while fuel economy has increased by 35 percent.

The increased production of electric vehicles accounts for much of the emission reductions. However, traditional gas vehicle sales remain the majority of new models sold.

In 2022, EV sales made up 7 percent of the new vehicle market. EPA estimates that number will rise to 12 percent in 2023.

While automakers are moving to EVs, the new vehicle market has shifted to trucks and heavier vehicles. Cars made up 37 percent of total 2022 vehicle production.

Environmental advocates said car manufacturers haven't done enough to significantly improve fuel efficiency or move to all electric.

Emissions from traditional gas vehicles have “barely budged” since 2015 despite technological innovations available, said Dave Cooke, senior vehicles analyst at the Union of Concerned Scientists, in a statement.

All large manufacturers comply with light-duty greenhouse gas requirements, the report found. **However, some companies relied on credits and “loopholes,” said Dan Becker, director of the Center for Biological Diversity’s Safe Climate Transport Campaign, in a statement.**

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The group representing most major automakers heralded the "positive" report from EPA [in a post on X](#), the site formerly known as Twitter. But the Alliance for Automotive Innovation said the Biden administration should also better coordinate rules on clean vehicles from EPA, the Department of Energy and the Department of Transportation, to ensure they do not overlap or conflict.

<https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2023/12/21/auto-emissions-hit-record-low-epa-reports-00132876>