



EPA report ties drop in air pollution to electric vehicles

The report comes at a critical juncture with President-elect Donald Trump pledging to cut fuel-economy standards aimed at boosting EV sales.

The report also shows that carmakers continue to rely on more profitable pickup trucks and SUVs, which has slowed down progress on emissions and fuel economy, according to Dan Becker, director of the Center for Biological Diversity’s safe climate transport program.

“Tougher Biden standards cut emissions, but automakers dragged their tailpipes, driving the reduction to less than the rules required,” Becker said in a statement. “To add injury to insult, Mr. Trump threatens to gut federal and state clean car standards and consumer tax credits, leaving automakers free to guzzle and pollute, and sticking consumers with high gas bills.”

Mike Lee

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Electric vehicle chargers are seen near parking stalls in Maryland. Julio Cortez/AP

E&E NEWS PM | Electric vehicles have helped drive down emissions and increase the fuel economy of cars sold in the U.S., EPA data shows.

Across the fleet of new cars and trucks sold in the U.S., vehicles emitted 319 grams of carbon dioxide per mile in 2023, down from 337 grams per mile in 2022, the agency’s [Automotive Trends Report](#) said. But without EVs and plug-in hybrid vehicles, the average would’ve been 357 grams per mile.

Likewise, average fuel economy increased to 27.1 mpg fleetwide. Without EVs and hybrids, the average would’ve been 24.9 mpg.

“Manufacturers continue to innovate and are bringing technologies to market which will directly improve air quality, better protecting people’s health and saving lives,” EPA Administrator Michael Regan said in a news release.

EVs, plug-in hybrids and fuel-cell vehicles made up 11.5 percent of sales in 2023, and EPA expects them to make up 14.8 percent of sales in 2024.

The report comes at a critical juncture. EPA and the Department of Transportation passed emissions and fuel economy standards last year aimed at boosting EV sales, but President-elect Donald Trump has pledged to roll back those rules when he takes office.

Cars and trucks make up 17 percent of U.S. climate pollution, the report said.

The report also shows that carmakers continue to rely on more profitable pickup trucks and SUVs, which has slowed down progress on emissions and fuel economy, according to Dan Becker, director of the Center for Biological Diversity's safe climate transport program.

The EPA regulations require carmakers to cut their CO₂ pollution by 6.5 percent annually, but they achieved a 4.3 percent improvement from 2022 to 2023.

“Tougher Biden standards cut emissions, but automakers dragged their tailpipes, driving the reduction to less than the rules required,” Becker said in a statement. “To add injury to insult, Mr. Trump threatens to gut federal and state clean car standards and consumer tax credits, leaving automakers free to guzzle and pollute, and sticking consumers with high gas bills.”

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