



Seattle
Parks & Recreation

Getting Around Green

Healthy Environment Stories



Americans have been dreaming of electric cars for more than a century. In the 21st Century, interest has increased because of growing concerns about the contribution of gas-powered vehicles to climate change and evolving electric car technology. Between 2010 and 2016, more than a million electric vehicles took to the roads around the world.

In Seattle, 60 percent of carbon emissions come from transportation. So, in 2016, the City of Seattle launched the [Drive Clean Seattle Fleet Initiative](#), which aims to cut Seattle's core greenhouse gas emissions and help us reach our goal of being a carbon neutral city by 2050. It calls for a standardized way of buying and evaluating green fleet vehicles, prohibits City employees from idling gas vehicles in place, and calls for a 50 percent reduction in municipal fleet emissions by 2025.

Seattle's carbon neutral electricity from Seattle City Light means that electrifying our fleet leads to a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. "Given our large fleet, Seattle Parks and Recreation has a great opportunity to reduce carbon emissions in our city," said Jeff Hodges, SPR's Fleets Manager. "Starting with our sedans, we've been electrifying as the technology allows. Now we are looking at pickup trucks, mowers, leaf blowers and even heavy-duty trucks."

In 2017, the Department of Finance and Administrative Services provided funding for the installation of 10 electric car charging stations at SPR facilities. In 2018, SPR then expanded our fleet of electric cars to include 10 new Chevy Bolts to complement our two Nissan Leafs. The Chevy Bolt was a game changer as it provides a 210-mile range on a single charge. "I like not having to fuel it," says Patrick Merriam, Parks Resources Manager, "and it has the same power as a fueled car." Looking forward, SPR will test a new electric Ford F150 scheduled to reach the market late next year.

SPR's greatest challenges to increasing our green fleet are electrical capacity at our facilities and the number of specialty and heavy vehicles that lack electric options. To tackle the technology gap, Seattle has joined 30 other cities in a joint purchasing effort to shift the industry to provide more electric vehicles and equipment.

SPR is also working with Seattle City Light to install public electric vehicle charging stations at certain parks throughout the city. We recognize that as a public agency, we can not only bring green technology to the mainstream, but we can also make using electric cars more viable in our community.

Learn more

www.seattle.gov/environment/climate-change/drive-clean-seattle

After driving an electric car in my day job, I'm considering buying one for my personal vehicle!
-Christopher Williams
Interim Superintendent
