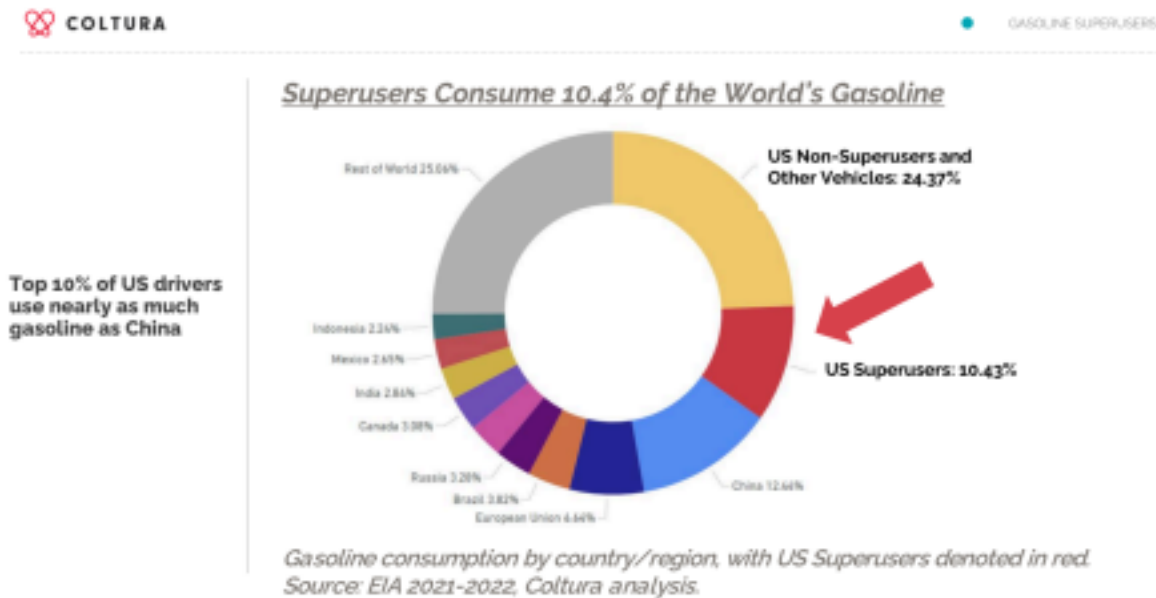


An Emerging Targeted EV Incentive Program to Maximize Impact and Cut Carbon

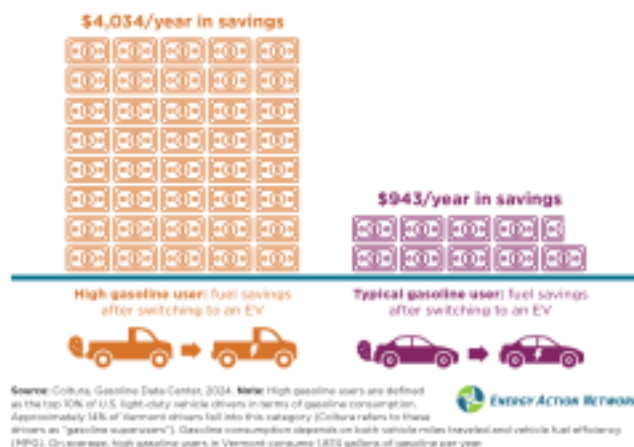
The rural nature of our beautiful Green Mountain State means that many Vermonters must rely on a personal vehicle to get them where they need to go for basic daily needs such as education, healthcare, and work. This also means that rural states have a high amount of emissions coming from the transportation sector; rural drivers consume a disproportionate share of the country's gasoline.

Reducing Vermonters' reliance on single-occupancy vehicles and ensuring that there are incentives available for those who need a personal vehicle to make the switch to an EV is pivotal to cutting climate pollution. Highest mileage drivers (also known as "gasoline superusers") represent the top 10% of gasoline consuming light-duty vehicle drivers in the United States.



There are 53,000 Highest Mileage Drivers in Vermont, making up 14.3% of Vermont drivers. Collectively they use 41% of the state's gasoline, 4.2 times what other drivers consume. Vermont's highest mileage drivers represent the state's most gasoline burdened households, spending on average 12.8% of their income annually on gasoline, versus non-burdened households at 5.1%. Prioritizing policies and programs that help superusers switch to EVs have climate and equity benefits. Data shows that switching to EVs is the fastest way to reduce emissions; creating opportunities for gasoline burdened drivers to switch to an EV not only reduces the state's emissions from the transportation sector, but it has the potential to save LMI households hundreds of dollars a month on fuel.

Average annual fuel savings from switching to an EV: Vermont high gasoline users vs. typical gasoline users



Burlington Electric Department (BED) has recently begun administering a pilot program designed to support high-mileage BED customers who are ready to switch to an all-electric vehicle. This incentive program supports longer distance commuters, ride hailing service drivers (taxis, Uber, Lyft), and food delivery drivers and is available to Burlington residents with cars registered in the city.

BED's Superusers program is designed to motivate high transportation fuel use customers to transition to all-electric vehicles. The average Burlington resident drives 7,500-8,000 miles per year. Drivers who travel 17,700 miles annually are eligible for a \$250 incentive while drivers with 25,300 or more vehicle miles traveled annually are eligible for a \$500 incentive.

BED General Manager, Darren Springer, hopes that this pilot program will pave the way for the state to implement and fund a superusers program to reach people in more rural parts of the state. As EVs continue to be developed for longer ranges and with more features, such as AWD and truck and SUV models, Springer believes that going electric will continue to become more viable and attractive for Vermonters. It is important that the incentives making EVs so affordable remain available, and new programs, like BED's superuser program, are introduced into the mix to provide extra support to those whose transition to electric would have an outsized impact on the participants' transportation costs as well the state's transportation fuel consumption.

For income-eligible customers, BED has additional existing incentives, as does the federal government, that can be stacked on top of the superuser incentive. This makes the switch to an EV even more attractive - not only is it cheaper to drive than a conventional fossil fueled car, but with the ability to stack incentives, it becomes more affordable to purchase as well.

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022 directed nearly \$400 billion in federal funding to climate and energy initiatives. This included funding for expanded tax credits and rebates for decarbonization solutions, including heat pumps, electric vehicles, rooftop solar, and more. These federal incentives can be combined with state and utility incentives to make clean energy solutions more affordable. Already, Vermonters have been twice as likely as residents of other states to take advantage of IRA tax credits, with the 3rd highest rate of uptake of IRA efficiency tax credits in the nation. Visit <https://homes.rewiringamerica.org/calculator> [\[homes.rewiringamerica.org\]](https://homes.rewiringamerica.org) to learn more about available incentives.

As we face significant uncertainty related to the future of federal funding for programs and incentives to directly help Americans, now is the time to take advantage of current opportunities and advocate for strong state and utility run programs. A high mileage incentive program like BED's pilot program is a very exciting opportunity because even with limited funds and capacity, it still can make a big difference for Vermonters and our state's emissions.

Resources:

Graphics from Coltura and more:

<https://coltura.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Vermont-Gasoline-Superusers-Mini-Report.pdf>

Energy Action Network Annual Report and Graphics:

<https://eanvt.org/2024-annual-report/>

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