



Written by [David Kelly](#) on July 17, 2023

## EV Owners Cautioned About Potential Disruption to Summer Travel Plans

With the hottest weeks of summer upon us and the nearly record-breaking temperatures sizzling across the Southwest this week, electric vehicle (EV) owners are being advised to adjust recharging habits or risk long-term damage to their cars' batteries.

According to a recent *Los Angeles Times* [article](#), "Electric vehicles, great for combating climate change, don't do well in extreme heat. It's a paradox being thrown into relief as multiple U.S. states bake under heat waves that are becoming more frequent and more intense."



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The *Times* continued:

High temperatures aren't kryptonite for battery-powered vehicles. An EV in a hot climate has to work harder to keep its battery and its passengers cool, but the car will function just fine. On a chemical level, though, extreme heat is akin to heart disease for EV batteries, or a slow-moving form of cancer.

That's because when temperatures climb, the ions in a car battery speed up. Once that happens, they often have trouble attaching to the anode or cathode. The pressure and speed can also create small cracks, which slow chemical reactions and make for less usable battery life.

Information on EV battery charging and the true lifetime of an EV battery has been lost in the fine print — if not considered taboo by EV manufacturers and the Biden administration. But with this heat wave, EV owners may very well be regretting jumping on the "save the planet and own an electric vehicle" bandwagon, especially with all the restrictions they need to adhere to to preserve their batteries.

While mentioning the Biden administration's [goal](#) of having 50 percent of all new vehicle sales be electric by 2030, *The Washington Times* [shared](#), "'Just in time for [the Environmental Protection Agency's] regulatory push on electric vehicles, this week's heat wave in the Southwest is bad news for EVs,' Western Energy Alliance, a lobbying group for oil and natural gas, said in a Twitter post."

If you own an EV in the desert Southwest, with average high temperatures during the summer months in the 90s or above, you'll need to think twice before traveling anywhere, even just to work or to run errands. On average, according to [CarEdge](#), EVs lose 17 percent of their range when the temperature reaches 95 degrees Fahrenheit:

A 17% drop in range would mean that a Model Y normally rated for 330 miles on a charge would get closer to 273 miles. Not too big of a deal. For electric vehicles with less EPA-rated



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range, it matters more. The standard range 2022 Nissan Leaf normally gets 150 miles on a charge, but that would drop to 124 miles in 95-degree weather. Ouch.

EV technology including the use of lithium-ion batteries is still young. It definitely needs to improve to become not only safer and more efficient, but convenient to those who choose to buy an EV.

Also, the current administration needs to stop the push for electric vehicles in their fight with supposed climate change. The public should have the final say on how we achieve cleaner energy, not hubris-infected politicians. Ultimately, the EV industry must prove itself worthy to American consumers and then let the free market dictate its success.

In the meantime, for current EV owners, numerous resources offer great tips on how to protect electric vehicles in hot weather. Chase [shared](#) these best practices to help guard against reduced range and prolong the life of EV batteries when the mercury rises:

- Park in a garage, covered lot or shaded area.
- Pre-cool the vehicle while it's still plugged in, using an app or timer function if you have one.
- Use the vehicle's air conditioning system sparingly. Consider cooling yourself instead of the car — for example, dress for the heat and try lowering the windows for air flow. Some EVs even have seat coolers, which are much more efficient than cabin A/C.
- Keep the tires properly inflated to reduce rolling resistance and heighten efficiency.
- Keep your EV clean and clutter-free, ensuring that you don't channel power toward hauling unnecessary weight. Cutting back by just a few pounds can have a positive effect!
- Avoid driving and/or charging during the hottest parts of the day, when possible.
- Charge your EV battery to 80% instead of 100%. A full charge creates more internal resistance and heat, further stressing the battery.
- If the vehicle has a "battery saver" and/or "hill-hold" mode, use them.
- Pay close attention to your EV range and plan for fewer battery-powered miles than usual when it's very hot out. While every EV is different, all are affected by the heat to some extent.



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