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New study shows high potential for EV Uptake in Toronto region, but few drivers know about purchase incentives

Government, Industry and NGOs must work together to address concerns identified among GTHA drivers

Toronto, ON – A newly released study of almost 1,200 drivers in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) shows that a set of misconceptions prevent gasoline-powered car drivers from switching to electric vehicles (EVs). Commissioned by the non-profit Plug'n Drive, the first-of-its-kind study in Ontario shows that action from governments, industry and the NGO community is needed to better inform car drivers about EVs and their advantages.

“Ontario would benefit greatly from accelerated EV uptake – and our study shows how we can get it done,” Plug'n Drive CEO Cara Clairman said. “We need action from government, industry and NGOs to dispel myths and better inform Ontario drivers about the benefits of EVs, including the existing purchase incentives. Our study found only 5 per cent of our gas car survey respondents were knowledgeable about Ontario’s incentive program.”

Funded by The Atmospheric Fund (TAF) and conducted by Toronto-based Research Now, the survey interviewed 1,000 gas car owners and 192 EV owners in the GTHA. Drivers listed unaffordable prices (31 per cent) as the top barrier for not switching to EVs. “If we can make drivers aware of these incentives, the perceived affordability gap can be closed” Clairman said.

“As our [TransformTO](#) plan shows, electrifying transportation with renewable energy is key to achieving low-carbon cities,” TAF CEO Julia Langer added. “All stakeholders must take action for widespread EV uptake, including the creation of an EV charging station network, peer-to-peer promotion, and community-based EV sharing.”

Ontario plans to increase EV sales from currently one to five per cent of all new vehicles by 2020 as part of its climate action plan. However, only 70 per cent of interviewed drivers see the connection between their vehicle choice and its climate impact.

“Ontario drivers that switch to EVs can reduce their carbon footprint by more than 90 per cent – thanks to our province’s energy mix,” Clairman explained. “Drivers can get up to \$15,000 in rebates when they buy an EV and charger in Ontario. We need to make sure Ontario drivers understand these benefits when they are in the market for a car.”

The survey also found widespread concern about the range of EVs amongst gas car drivers (13%) – so-called ‘range anxiety’. The reality is somewhat different, as the research showed that EV drivers travel further and more frequently than their gas car counterparts. Research also shows that the average driver only needs one EV recharge per week.

Please also see the media backgrounder and the full survey report for more information.

About Plug'n Drive



Plug'n Drive is a non-profit organization committed to accelerating the adoption of electric vehicles to maximize their environmental and economic benefits. Since 2011, Plug'n Drive has established itself as a leader in the electric vehicle industry; a trusted source of unbiased information about electric cars, charging stations and the electricity sector. The newly opened EV Discovery Centre offers Toronto region residents the opportunity to learn about and test-drive EVs first-hand. To learn more about our programs and services, visit plugndrive.ca.

About The Atmospheric Fund (TAF)

Founded in 1991, TAF invests in urban solutions to reduce carbon emissions and air pollution in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area. To date, TAF has invested more than \$50 million and contributed to Toronto-wide emissions reductions of 24 per cent below 1990 levels. For more information about TAF's projects and partners, please visit taf.ca.

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For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact:

Brian Millar, Plug'n Drive Communications Advisor, 647-780-6806 (cell) or brian@plugndrive.ca

Tim Ehlich, TAF Communications Manager, 647-468-3641 (cell) or tehlich@taf.ca