

Should Canada Ban Fossil Fueled Automobiles?

Discussion Prompt

Canada should ban the sale and manufacturing of fossil fueled automobiles.

General Background

Due to the greenhouse gas emissions they emit, fossil fueled automobiles are bad for the environment and human health. Given this, some argue that Canada should ban the sale and manufacturing of new fossil fueled automobiles. Others object, citing concerns about adequate infrastructure, the automobile industry, and the production of electric vehicles themselves.

In 2023, the Trudeau government rolled out a policy to phase out fossil fueled automobiles entirely by 2035, in an effort to meet Canada's net-zero emissions goal by 2050. In February 2026, amidst concerns about rising tariffs and jobs in the automotive industry, Prime Minister Mark Carney introduced a new policy that got rid of the Trudeau-era policy to end the sale of all fossil fueled automobiles entirely by 2035. Instead, the Carney government has promised to give Canadians rebates for purchasing electric and hybrid vehicles. This shift in policy comes as the automobile industry in Canada was hit hard by tariffs from the United States. Instead of banning sales entirely, the idea is to incentivize the Canadian market to shift towards the manufacturing and sales of Electric Vehicles without harming the Canadian automobile industry too much.

For More Information:

- [Goodbye EV sales mandate, hello purchase rebates. Carney shakes up Canada's auto industry](#) | CBC
- [Ban on gas car sales walked back by EU](#) | CBC
- [Market Snapshot: How much CO₂ do electric vehicles, hybrids and gasoline vehicles emit?](#) | Government of Canada

Yes

*Here are some of the reasons why people might argue that Canada **should** ban the sale and manufacturing of fossil fueled automobiles.*

Reduces Canada's greenhouse gas emissions

Banning the sale of fossil fueled vehicles would significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In 2023, Transport Canada reported that the road transportation sector made up 18% of Canada's total greenhouse gas emissions. [Canada has a responsibility](#), both domestically and globally, to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions in alignment with the international Paris Agreement and the Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act.

Sets Canada up for future success

As much of the world transitions away from fossil fuels, this kind of policy would be a push towards the Canadian automobile industry to do the same. Transitioning away from fossil fueled cars and toward more environmentally sustainable alternatives would ensure the longevity of Canada's automotive industry. Moreover, this policy would allow Canada to step up as a climate leader on the global stage.

Lower operating costs

Once purchased, electric vehicles have a significantly cheaper operating cost. The Government of Canada [estimates](#) that charging an electric vehicle costs 5-10 times less than filling up on gas or diesel. Moreover, it is estimated that electric vehicles cost 40-50% less to maintain than fossil fueled cars, which require regular maintenance that electric cars do not, such as engine tuneups and oil changes.

Read More:

- [Gasoline versus electric cars? Here's how their life cycle emissions compare in Canada](#) | Canada's National Observer
- [Discover how you can save money with an electric vehicle](#) | Government of Canada

No

*Here are some of the reasons why people might argue that Canada **should not** ban the sale and manufacturing of fossil fueled automobiles.*

Lack of infrastructure

While we are in the process of building more electric vehicle charging stations across the country, right now we lack the infrastructure to provide all Canadians with accessible alternatives to fossil fueled automobiles. For instance, many Canadians living in rural areas do not have access to reliable public transportation systems, and electric vehicles require upfront payments that are often unaffordable. Moreover, as of now, many parts of the country lack public charging stations for electric vehicles.

Financial harm to Canadian manufacturers

The majority of Canadian manufacturers produce fossil fueled automobiles. To demand that they stop producing these vehicles would significantly harm the automobile industry, which has already taken a significant hit after tariffs imposed by the United States.

Human rights concerns with the production of electric vehicles

While Canada has an obligation to transition to green energy across sectors, Canada has a duty to ensure this transition should not come at the expense of human rights abuses in other places. Right now, the minerals required to make batteries for electric vehicles are often extracted in harmful conditions. For example, much of the cobalt required for lithium batteries that electric vehicles use is [mined in the Democratic Republic of Congo](#) (DRC), where the mining conditions are often extremely dangerous and labour rights are not consistently upheld.

Read More:

- [Energy Transition](#) | Amnesty International
- [Feds back big EV charging stations but gaps glare in small-scale project roll-out](#) | Canada's National Observer