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MEDIA TIP
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Could a Norway-style electric vehicle revolution happen in BC?

What lessons can British Columbia learn from the current electric vehicle revolution in Norway? A new report from the Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS) says it can be done in BC, and offers advice on how to do it.

In the space of six years, Norway has gone from a standing start to more than 74,000 electric vehicles (EVs) on its streets—the highest per capita penetration of EVs in the world—and years ahead of its own schedule. Since January this year more than 20 per cent of all new cars sold are electric. And officials say the country is now poised to reach its revised target of 200,000 electric vehicles well before its 2018 deadline.

So why are drivers in this Scandinavian nation—which has a similar size population, mountainous geography and hydroelectric profile to British Columbia—going electric, and in such large numbers? In other words, why does Norway have more than 30 times the number of electric vehicles that BC does?

The answer lies in Norway’s innovative policy mix of tax relief and incentives, as detailed in the new PICS briefing note, [*Norway’s electric vehicle revolution: Lessons for British Columbia*](#).

The report found that while financial incentives such as tax breaks and rebates (as offered in BC’s popular Clean Energy Vehicle scheme) are attractive, it was Norway’s extra perks such as free parking, free ferries, free toll roads and access to bus lanes that made EV purchases irresistible to new car buyers. Backing this up was a major rollout of re-charging stations across the country, both for driver convenience and peace of mind.

PICS executive director Tom Pedersen says Norway has achieved rapid and remarkable results with its clean transport makeover, which could be replicated in other jurisdictions.

“Transportation is BC’s largest aggregate source of greenhouse gas emissions, and widespread EV adoption would help British Columbia meet its climate change mitigation commitments,” he says.

The report outlines what Norway got right, how much it cost, and what challenges lie ahead in its electric-vehicle revolution, plus recommendations for how BC could implement a similar program here.

The briefing note is available on the PICS website, and is part of a series of climate-related analysis briefs, with recommendations for policymakers and the public. PICS is a collaboration of BC’s four research intensive universities, hosted and led by the University of Victoria.

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