



Auto Coverage

Why EV Insurance Costs Are Higher Than for Gas Cars

IF YOU'VE been considering purchasing an electric vehicle, be sure that you consider the cost of insuring it before you buy.

Due to the complexity of these vehicles and higher repair costs, even the least expensive EVs like the Chevy Bolt and the Nissan Leaf cost more to insure than gas-powered cars that are larger.

There is some debate whether those added costs are balanced out by lower operating costs, including not having to purchase gas and cheaper overall maintenance as there are fewer things that can go wrong with an EV compared to a gas-powered vehicle.

Insurance is an important consideration, especially now as rates have been climbing steadily for more than a decade — and with costs rising sharply in the last two years.

Insurance Costs: EV vs. Gas*

Gas vehicles

2022 Honda CR-V: \$1,808
2022 Toyota Corolla: \$1,991
2022 Nissan Altima: \$2,263

EVs

2022 Chevy Bolt 11LT: \$2,269
2022 Nissan Leaf S: \$2,313
2023 Audi E-Tron Quattro Premium: \$3,244
2023 Tesla Model S: \$4,762

* Average in October 2024

Source: Quadrant Information Services

See "Shortage" on page 2

Average Repair Prices



Gas Cars

Toyota Corolla: \$362
Nissan Altima: \$483



Hybrid

Toyota Prius: \$408

Source: Repairpal



Electric

Nissan Leaf: \$748
Tesla Model S: \$1,047



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Protecting the people and property that matter most to you.

How Vehicle Sensors Prevent Accidents

ADVANCEMENTS IN automotive vehicle technology have played a pivotal role in reducing accidents and saving lives. Modern vehicles are increasingly equipped with a range of sensors designed to monitor, detect and prevent potential dangers on the road. Here's a look at how these sensors work, and the technologies they employ to create a safer driving experience.

Collision avoidance

Collision avoidance systems utilize sensors such as radar, cameras and ultrasonic sensors to detect obstacles ahead. If a potential collision is identified, the system may warn the driver and, if necessary, apply the brakes or take corrective actions to avoid impact.

This technology significantly reduces rear-end collisions, especially in stop-and-go traffic or emergency situations. Features like automatic emergency braking are often standard in these systems.

Blind spot detection

Blind spot detection systems use radar sensors, typically mounted on the rear bumper, to monitor areas that are difficult for drivers to see. When a vehicle enters the blind spot, the system triggers an alert, often in the form of a light or an audible warning.

This feature prevents side collisions during lane changes by making drivers aware of vehicles they might not notice. It reduces the risks associated with blind spots, which are a common cause of crashes.

Real-time hazard detection

These systems analyze data to predict collisions, detect pedestrians, identify road signs, and more. Lidar (light detection and ranging) sensors use laser pulses to create a 3D map of the vehicle's surroundings. By measuring the time it takes for the light to return after hitting an object, lidar provides precise distance and shape data.

If a hazard is detected, the system can warn the driver or automatically apply brakes.

Tactile feedback mechanisms

This system uses vibrations or resistance in the steering wheel to alert the driver of potential dangers. For example, if the vehicle drifts out of its lane without signaling, the wheel might vibrate to warn the driver.

Combined with lane-keeping assist systems, it can gently steer the vehicle back into the correct lane if necessary.

Tire temperature sensors

Tire temperature sensors monitor the heat within tires and detect conditions that could lead to a blowout, such as under-inflation, overloading or excessive temperature increases due to friction.

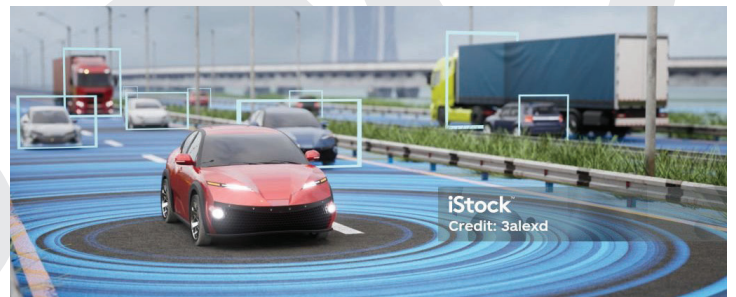
These sensors can prevent tire failures, reducing the risk of accidents caused by sudden blowouts or loss of traction.

Lane departure warning

This warns the driver when the vehicle drifts out of its lane without signaling, and gently steers it back if needed.

The takeaway

By leveraging technology, these systems work together to prevent accidents, save lives and promote a safer driving environment. And as innovation continues, sensors will play an even greater role in shaping the future of road safety and accident prevention. ❖



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Shortage of Qualified EV Repair Shops Drives up Costs

Why EV insurance is costlier

There are a number of reasons EV insurance is more expensive:

EVs are more expensive – According to Kelley Blue Book, the average price of an EV was \$58,940 in March 2024, nearly \$11,000 more than the average cost of a new gas-driven vehicle then. The sales price has a direct correlation with the cost of insurance.

Costlier repairs – Parts are more expensive for EVs. As well, many of these vehicles have sophisticated camera systems throughout the vehicle to help drive-assist and self-driving technologies work properly.

There is also a scarcity of replacement parts, which results in longer repair times and higher costs.

But the single-most expensive part to repair or replace in an EV is the battery. The average cost of replacing a battery can be anywhere from \$4,489 all the way to \$17,658, according to a July 2023 article in *ConsumerAffairs*, an online publication.

Scarcity of qualified repair shops – Repairing these vehicles requires specialized training and there are not many independent garages that have the capacity to repair them.

That leads to backed-up work orders. In addition, there's a shortage of technicians who are qualified to work on EVs.

What the future holds

Industry watchers predict that the cost of EVs and their associated repair costs will eventually start to drop as more drivers purchase these vehicles and more qualified repair facilities come on line. That in turn should affect insurance costs as well.

But for now, expect to pay more to insure an EV versus a gas-powered vehicle.

A final point: there is some good news, as some insurers offer discounts for EVs because they are involved in fewer fire-related accidents and are more eco-friendly. ❖

Winterize Your Home to Prevent Costly Damage

WHEN WINTER approaches, it is time for homeowners to start securing their homes to protect them against the elements — wind, rain, sleet, hail, snow and ice. The most common causes of damage to properties during the colder months are hail, rain and wind.

Failing to winterize your home can lead to costly problems later and leave your family freezing in some cases. And not all issues that arise from the effects of the elements are covered by your insurance, particularly if you've neglected problems.

To ensure that doesn't happen to you, consider the following winterization tips.

Winterizing the roof

The roof is the best place to start when winter-proofing a home. All types of severe weather will stress shingles over time. Whether it is wind tugging at them or debris chipping away at them, shingles must be kept in good condition or replaced as needed.

Before the first freeze or snowstorm arrives, check the roof carefully to determine the condition of the shingles. Make any needed repairs as quickly as possible.

A roof can also sustain damage from branches that fall onto it. This happens when trees are not regularly trimmed, and the result is often water leaking into the home itself. Over time, even a slow and unnoticeable leak can lead to extensive rotting.



Keep the roof safe

- Check it for damage, clean the gutters and make sure downspouts are clear.
- Trim all trees and especially dead branches around the home.
- Make sure the flashing is in good shape to avoid water damage.
- Use impact-resistant roofing materials whenever possible.
- Fix any damaged or bubbled areas on a flat or sloped roof.
- Put extra insulation in the attic to prevent ice buildup and subsequent water damage.

Winterizing the basement

When the roof is finished, check the basement next. Make an appointment to have the furnace inspected and cleaned each year, and be sure this is done by a qualified technician.

Put insulation on all exposed water pipes. It is also helpful to keep the thermostat turned up during colder periods to prevent pipes from freezing and bursting.

If there are any flammable materials in the basement, make sure they are stored away from wiring or heating units.



Winter-proofing windows

Leaky windows will let in not only air, but also snow and rain into the home. This can lead to big problems after a short period of time, so it is important to make sure the caulking around the windows and door frames is in good repair.

After completing these tasks, walk around the house and look for other items that need fixing.



Check the chimney

If there is a fireplace or wood-burning stove, have the chimney checked and cleaned annually before the colder months arrive.

Clean under the dryer and its exhaust pipe to prevent fires.

Ensure snow removal tools are accessible

Be sure that all of your snow removal tools, including shovels and deicing agents like salt and sand, are out of storage and easily accessible when snow starts to fall. This might be a small task on your winterizing list, but it's an important one.



The last word

If you decide to do this work on your own, give yourself plenty of time before the cold weather arrives.

If you discover any issues that could pose a hazard to yourself or your property, you should call a professional right away so that you aren't left with a frigid disaster that disrupts your life. ❖



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Safeguard Against Costly Thanksgiving Mishaps

THERE ARE an average of 2,300 home fires on Thanksgiving Day each year, according to the US Fire Administration. The leading cause of these fires is unattended cooking. Even if you aren't going to be at home, there is still a risk: burglary. To make sure that Thanksgiving doesn't turn into the Nightmare before Christmas, consider the following:

Kitchen safety tips

- Never leave the kitchen while cooking on the stove top. Some types of cooking, especially those that involve frying or sautéing with oil, need continuous attention.
- When cooking a turkey, remain at home and check it regularly.
- Turkey fryers increase your risk of burn or fire hazards. Be sure the oil used to fry the turkey is the right temperature, and always fry outside in a well-ventilated area.
- Use timers to keep track of cooking times, particularly for foods that take longer to cook.
- Keep things that can catch fire – like oven mitts, wooden utensils, food wrappers and towels – at least 3 feet away from the stove.
- Avoid loose clothing that can come in contact with a heat source.
- If you have a fire, slide a lid over the pan and turn off the burner. Do not remove the cover because the fire could start again. Let the pan cool for a long time. Never throw water on the fire.
- For an oven fire, turn off the heat and keep the door closed. Only open the door once you're confident the fire is completely out, standing to the side as you do so.
- Keep children at least 3 feet away from the stove.



When traveling

If you are traveling for the holiday, protect your home while you're away to reduce the risk of burglary. Consider these tips:

Use a home security system – Security systems can alert you if a burglar enters your home and some can also alert local law enforcement. Some offer round-the-clock fire monitoring services or allow you to check in from your smartphone while you are away.

Don't post travel plans on Facebook – Be cautious about posting your travel plans for all your contacts to see.

Make your home look occupied – Set your lights on timers that turn on at night, and stop mail and newspaper delivery.

Make life hard for burglars – Thwart thieves by:

- Locking all windows, gates and doors.
- Installing sensor lights that turn on if they sense motion.
- Never leaving a key hidden outside, like under a rock or the mat. Consider a combination key lock box instead. ❖