

CHARGE AHEAD MONTANA

Mark Nienow

Owner of a 2019 Hyundai Kona EV



What made you decide to buy an electric vehicle?

It's what the planet needs. I have a 2005 Ford Focus with 160K miles and always said when it was time to replace it, I'd buy a EV. Decided I would keep the Focus for winter use and the EV for summer use... I decided Spring of 2019 was the time to buy.

What has been your favorite part of owning your electric vehicle?

Not paying for gas. I have solar power tied to the grid, so my one week round trip to Billings from Roundup (100+miles) is essentially paid for by the solar system. The other favorite part is the unexpected, but continual amazement at the horsepower and torque. It's got 2.5 times the torque of the Focus and 50%+ more HP. It will burn rubber at 5mph and do 0-60 in 6.4 seconds.

What has been the most challenging part of owning an electric vehicle?

Planning longer trips than the full charge range miles permit, which for the Kona is 256 miles during warm (not hot) weather... it necessitates knowing where the stations are, how far

they are between and how long you will need to commit time to charging. In some cases it requires that you drive less distance and charge over night at a motel.

Have you ever taken your electric vehicle on a trip? If so, where to?

We've taken three long trips - one to Thermopolis, WY, one to Old Faithful and one to Philipsburg, MT.

Would you recommend an electric vehicle to someone considering buying a new car?

Only after finding out what their travel requirements are. If their typical round trip distance was well within the mile range of the car they were considering purchasing, then yes, but with caveats concerning longer trips.

Any other comments?

Understand the efficiency of EV's over gas vehicles... EV's have a significantly lower carbon footprint. A gallon of gas is equivalent to about 34 kWh and under normal driving conditions I get 4 miles per kWh... At standard residential electric rates of \$0.124/kWh it would cost about \$4.25 to travel 120 miles in the Kona.