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Californians Told Not to Charge Electric Cars Days After Gas Car Sales Ban

BY **KHALEDA RAHMAN** ON 8/31/22 AT 7:33 AM EDT



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Californians may need to take measures to conserve energy, including by avoiding charging electric vehicles, to prevent strain to the state's power grid over the Labor Day weekend, officials said—a week after state regulators voted on a plan to ban the sale of gasoline-powered cars.

The new policy, approved by the California Air Resources Board, will require all new cars sold in California to be free of greenhouse gas emissions by 2035 as part of an effort to fight climate change.

But with a heat wave forecast for the coming days, California's grid operator on Tuesday warned that the excessive heat would stress the energy grid and conservation may be needed over the holiday weekend to avert power outages.

The California Independent System Operator said it issued an order restricting maintenance operations from August 31 through September 6 to ensure that all

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In a news release, the California ISO said it expects that it will issue calls for voluntary conservation of electricity through Flex alerts over the long weekend.



Traffic moves along Highway 101 on August 24, 2022 in Mill Valley, California
JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

"During a Flex Alert, consumers are urged to reduce energy use from 4-9 p.m. when the system is most stressed because demand for electricity remains high and there is less solar energy available," the release said.

The top conservation actions are to set thermostats to 78 degrees or higher to reduce air conditioner use, avoid using large appliances and charging electric vehicles, and turn off unnecessary lights, it said.

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"Lowering electricity use during that time will ease strain on the system, and prevent more drastic measures, including rotating power outages," it added.

Some on social media pointed out that conflicting messages were being sent to Californians.

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"California recently ruled to ban gas powered cars by 2035 but just put out a warning to 'avoid charging electric vehicles' due to power grid issues and blackouts," The Hodgetwins—conservative comedians Keith and Kevin Hodge—wrote in a tweet.

Robby Starbuck, a former Republican congressional candidate in Tennessee, wrote: "This comes days after California became the

first state to ban gas cars by 2035 which means massive pain for the grid there when everyone is forced to drive only electric cars. Toddlers could run a state more competently than Democrats."

California's Democratic Governor, Gavin Newsom, hailed the new rule requiring all car sales to be zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) by 2035 as a "groundbreaking" effort to tackle the climate crisis.

"We can solve this climate crisis if we focus on the big, bold steps necessary to cut pollution," he said in a statement on August 25.

"This plan's yearly targets—35 percent ZEV sales by 2026, 68 percent by 2030, and 100 percent by 2035—provide our roadmap to reducing dangerous carbon emissions and moving away from fossil fuels. That's 915 million oil barrels' worth

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Newsom said the \$10 billion the state was investing in making the transition would make it "easier and cheaper for all Californians to purchase electric cars."

The California ISO and Newsom's office have been contacted for further comment.

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