

All-Electric Homes (and Buildings) Are Central to Mitigating Climate Change

As much as we Americans love our gas fireplaces, gas ranges and gas grills, we need to recognize that the move to an all-electric home, with the electricity being generated using minimal fossil fuels, is central to the goal of mitigating the effects of climate change.

And it can be a good future, especially if you're able to generate all the electricity that your home and cars use.

That's the future Rita and I have created for ourselves. We have 10 kW of solar

panels on our Golden home, enough to heat and cool our home and charge our two electric cars. Our forced air furnace only burns gas when the outside temp dips below freezing. Otherwise, a heat pump provides all the heat we need. And recently we replaced our gas water heater with a hybrid water heater that heats all the water we need using its built-in heat pump. It has a standard electric heater coil in case we need faster recovery. (We never have needed faster recovery.)

Yes, we still have a gas cooktop and gas fireplace, and our BBQ grill is plumbed with gas. I can picture us moving to an induction electric cooktop, electric fireplace and elec-

tric grill, but for now we comfort ourselves with the knowledge that we have drastically reduced our carbon footprint *and* our monthly energy bills with the use of heat pumps for heating, cooling and water heating, as well as by driving EVs.

A December article on axios.com reported that some progressive jurisdictions are now banning gas hookups in new residential and commercial construction. According to the article, 40 California municipalities, starting with Berkeley in 2019, have banned the installation of natural gas service in new construction.

The most common argument against this anti-natural gas trend relates to the cost of electric heating vs. gas heating, but the people who make that argument are probably thinking of conventional *resistance* heating, such as baseboard electric heating.

Resistance heating is similar to your kitchen toaster, sending electricity to a coil causing it to generate heat. There is a more efficient way to heat, however, which is to use a heat pump. A heat pump *moves* heat instead of *generating* heat, and the

cost is as little as one quarter that of resistance heating for the same BTU (heat) output.

Moreover, a heat pump can provide both heating and cooling, merely by reversing the direction in which it moves heat, replacing both the gas furnace and electric air conditioning unit which most of us have in our homes.

Another argument *against* increased electrification is that electricity is itself created by the burning of coal and natural gas. The current fuel mix of Xcel Energy in Colorado is 36% natural gas, 32.5% coal, and the rest renewable energy (mostly wind). The company's goal is 55% renewable by 2026 and 100% "carbon-free" by 2050, so it makes sense to start now replacing gas appliances with high efficiency electric ones such as heat pumps.

Keep in mind, too, that we can generate our own electricity at home

and on our office buildings, taking advantage of "net metering," paying only to be connected to the electric grid. With net metering, Xcel's grid functions like a battery, taking excess electricity from our solar installations during the day and delivering it back to us when the sun goes away — or when our solar panels are covered with snow!

Read the posting of this article at www.GoldenREblog.com for links to websites with more information on electrifying your home and how doing so can save you money.

Want to Avoid Bidding Wars?

Sellers love bidding wars. Buyers not so much. If you're a buyer and want to avoid a bidding war, simply ask one of our agents to set up an MLS alert including this criterion: **Days in MLS >9**. There are 1,021 listings on REcolorado 1 to 9 days on MLS, but 4,044 *over* 9 days.

'Selling Agent' vs. 'Seller's Agent' Confuses People

Among the real estate terminology that confuses home buyers and sellers is the term "selling agent."

The selling agent is, in fact, the agent representing the buyer in the purchase of a home, not to be confused (hopefully) with the seller's agent, also referred to as the listing agent.

The reasoning behind calling a buyer's agent the selling agent is that the buyer's agent is the one who actually sells the home. The listing agent could, of course, sell his listing himself, but 90% of the time (actually closer to 95% of the time), the home is sold by another agent who shows the home to a buyer and then writes the contract to purchase it. In return for finding the buyer, the listing agent then shares his or her listing commission with the selling agent. It's called the "coop" commission, because the selling agent is cooperating with the listing agent to sell the listing.

I like to compare our industry to

the automobile industry. Picture, for a moment, a sales person working for a Chevrolet dealership being able to bring a buyer to a Subaru dealership, get the keys to any of the cars on the lot, give multiple test drives and then get paid 40 to 50% of a Subaru sales person's commission for selling one of that dealer's cars. That's how real estate works. The Multiple Listing System, or MLS, was created to facilitate such "cooperation and compensation" in the real estate industry. It benefits both buyer and seller as well as both real estate agents.

Live in Downtown Golden!

We have two condo listings in the heart of downtown Golden. One is on Clear Creek, the other is on Washington Avenue. You can take a narrated video tour of both at www.GoldenCondo.info. We will provide totally free local moving. Just pack & unpack!

REAL ESTATE TODAY



By JIM SMITH, Realtor®

We Must Face the Coming Crisis of Road Funding

I've been driving electric cars, buying little or no gasoline, since 2012, happy to be a freeloader when it comes to the cost of building and maintaining our state and federal roads and bridges.

But the adoption of electric cars is accelerating, as expected, to the point where we can't continue to depend on gas and diesel taxes to pay for our transportation infrastructure.

Yes, I have paid a \$50 registration fee each year for my EVs, but that doesn't come close to paying my fair share of the costs, and it contributes nothing to the federal

highway trust fund.

In Colorado, there is a 23-cent-per-gallon gas tax, plus an 18.4-cent federal gas tax. Rita and I drove our three EVs a total of 16,380 miles in 2020. If they had been fueled by gas and got 25 miles per gallon, we would have purchased 655 gallons, paying \$271 in state and federal gas taxes.

Raising the gas tax makes no sense as fewer and fewer vehicles will be consuming gas in coming years.

As much as I'd like to keep being a freeloader in this regard, I am willing to pay 1.5 cents per mile traveled on my combined state and federal tax returns instead of paying \$50 in annual registration fees per vehicle. This is referred to as a VMT (vehicle miles traveled) tax.

Critics of a VMT tax say people will lie about miles traveled, but our tax system is based on voluntary reporting, and mileage is easily audited now that cars, like Tesla, are connected to the internet.

Sign Up for Our EV Roundup

If you own an electric vehicle and are willing to show it off to potential EV buyers, please consider bringing it to Golden Real Estate's parking lot on **Saturday, April 3, from 2 to 5 pm** for our annual Drive Electric Earth Day roundup. Register to bring your EV at www.DriveElectricWeek.info.



Every article in this ad is also posted at GoldenREblog.com

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