

US utility plans to switch 1200 vehicles to electric by 2030

August 19 2021, by Jonathan Mattise

The nation's largest public utility plans to switch out 1,200 of its vehicles for electric ones by 2030, furthering its role in that market for a power supplier that also plans to help add charging stations across the region, the utility's top official said Wednesday.

Tennessee Valley Authority CEO Jeff Lyash announced the changeout plans within its current fleet of about 3,800 vehicles during a board meeting.

The plan includes downsizing the fleet's 600 light-duty vehicles to 400 electric versions, which are typically sedans and SUVs; and initially changing out 800 medium-duty vehicles, or about half of the fleet's pickup trucks, TVA spokesperson Jim Hopson said.

The utility is also evaluating reductions in the medium-duty vehicles through efficiency and retirements, Hopson said. Possible switch-out of heavy duty ones depends on technology and price improvements, Lyash said.

The changes will occur as current vehicles reach the end of their usable lives, he said.

The plan coincides with the rollout of efforts to install fast-charging stations every 50 miles (80 kilometers) along major thoroughfares in Tennessee, with the goal of starting to deploy those chargers by the end of the year and having them largely in place by the end of 2022, Lyash

said. TVA is also joining with other utilities in a coalition to connect a variety of regions with electric chargers, "from New England to West Texas, and from Detroit to Disney World," Lyash said.

The plan is to have 80 charging locations with at least two fast chargers each across the region by the end of 2026, Hopson said.

On Wednesday, TVA's board also voted for a \$220 million plan to extend a pandemic-times credit of 2.5% to its customers, which include local [power](#) companies and large industrial entities, through the 2022 budget year with the possibility of continuing it through 2023.

Lyash said the pandemic credit for 2021 totaled \$200 million, and local power companies used their share to avoid some planned rate increases; cover losses through unpaid customer power bills; and invest in infrastructure.

Of the 153 local power companies served by TVA, 144 are part of a long-term power initiative that results in another 3.1% credit.

Also Wednesday, the board replaced its chairman, John Ryder, with a new chairman, Bill Kilbride. The board seats of Ryder and Kenneth Allen expired in May, and two other seats are vacant. President Joe Biden has nominated four people for those slots but they have not been confirmed by the Senate yet.

Ryder and Allen remain on the board until their successors are confirmed and take office or until the end of the current congressional session, typically in December, whichever comes first.

The Tennessee Valley Authority was created in 1933 under the New Deal to provide electricity, [flood control](#) and [economic development](#) in Tennessee and parts of six surrounding states.

Its customers include some businesses and local power distributors serving 10 million people. The utility is funded largely by ratepayers and does not use tax dollars.

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