

WORKING WITH YOUR ELECTRIC UTILITY: A Smart Step to Take Early in Your EV Journey

If your business is considering electric vehicles (EVs) and plans to install EV charging equipment, it is important to **connect early with your electric utility**. Whether you're operating a fleet of light-, medium-, or heavy-duty vehicles, installing several EV chargers or just one or two, your utility can be a key partner in making your transition smooth, cost-effective, and future-ready.

WHY EARLY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS

Installing EV chargers isn't just about plugging into the wall. It's about ensuring you're aware of how your company will be charged for your fleet's 'electric fuel' and all the options available to you. It's also about ensuring your facility and the electrical grid have the electrical capacity to power your vehicles reliably and efficiently.

Your utility can help you:

- *Optimize your power bill to account for your new EV charging power consumption*
- *Assess whether other utility rate plans might be better for you*
- *Access EV charging rebates and incentives, if available*
- *Understand what's needed to assess your site's electrical capacity*
- *Understand any permitting or other permissions that may be required*
- *Identify whether any grid upgrades are needed before installation*
- *Design scalable systems for future growth*

COMMON CHALLENGES YOU CAN AVOID

Without early utility coordination, businesses can face:

- *Missed rebate or incentive opportunities due to timing or eligibility issues*
- *Misunderstood power bill options*
- *Project delays due to long lead times for utility upgrades in some cases*

FAQS: WORKING WITH YOUR UTILITY

Q: When should we contact our utility?

A: You should understand any utility program and required processes as early as possible—ideally before purchasing vehicles or charging equipment.

Q: Are there different billing/rate plans available?

A: In some cases, yes. Many utilities offer different tariff or rate structure options for commercial customers. Some are explicitly tailored for EV charging customers, whereas others may not be framed that way but could still be beneficial depending on your company's operations. For example, time-of-use rates that allow for lower electricity rates in the evening (compared to during the day). Even if you do not change your utility rate, it's important to understand how new EV charging can affect your bill.

Q: Are there financial incentives available?

A: In some cases, yes. Many utilities offer rebates, grants, or special rate programs for EV charging installations.

Q: Can the utility help us choose the right equipment?

A: In some cases, yes. Some utilities can provide technical guidance or maintain a list of approved EV charging equipment.

Q: What kind of upgrades might be needed?

A: You may need to expand your building's electrical panel expansions, or new service connections depending on your facility's capacity.

Q: How long does the process take?

A: Utility work can take several months, or even multiple years, if the EV charging equipment consumes a lot of power. Early engagement helps align your project timeline and avoid delays.

READY TO GET STARTED?

Reach out to your utility to begin the conversation.

Try these steps to learn about any resources your utility may offer and to find a point of contact:

Start with their website

- Look for EV-related keywords and pages such as Electric Vehicles, Fleet Advisory Services, Commercial EV Programs, etc.
- Sometimes a utility's EV content may reside under areas of its website about saving money and energy. Look out for keywords such as Save Money, Save Energy, Energy Efficiency, Smart Energy, etc.
- Many utilities have different webpages for business customers vs residential customers, so keep that in mind.

Don't see anything that is specifically EV-related on your utility's website?

- Review the section of their website pertaining to Start/Stop Service, Applying for New Service, New Construction Service, Submitting a Service Application, etc.
- You can also always reach out to your utility's general customer support phone number or email address

Not sure which is your utility or who is the EV-related point of contact there?

- Consider using GridFAST, a tool that connects businesses with EV-related points of contact at any US utility.

