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POWERING THE FUTURE

First gas station in America to ditch oil for 100% electric vehicle charging opens in Maryland

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KEY POINTS

The first gas station in the U.S. that has been completely transitioned from a petroleum station to exclusively charging EVs opened Thursday in Takoma Park, Maryland.

RS Automotives, the local gas station, has been around since 1958, made the switch.



There are more than 20,700 registered electric vehicles in Maryland, and the area also has an electric taxi service in need of more charging infrastructure.





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RS Automotives, the local gas station, has been around since 1958.

Depeswar Doley, owner of the station since 1997, said he was already unhappy with the way oil and gasoline companies structure contracts — such as limiting the use of multiple suppliers, including clauses that extend contracts when a certain volume of sales is not met and limiting maintenance support. These business factors already were pushing him to consider other options.

A nudge from his daughter was the final step in convincing Doley to make the switch to EV charging.

“My daughter, who is 17, she is the one who convinced me after I told her that I was going to talk to the [Electric Vehicle Institute] guys,” Doley said.

A public works manager for the city of Takoma Park, Maryland, first suggested to Doley a conversation with Electric Vehicle Institute.

When he told his daughter about the idea, “she said, ‘Dad, that’s a real good suggestion.’”



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environment.

— [Depeswar Doley](#) OWNER OF THE FIRST GAS STATION TO EXCLUSIVELY OFFER EV CHARGING

Doley said he's not too worried about how the switch will change his business income.

"You notice there are not too many electric vehicles on the road," he said. "So it's not something that I expect to become rich overnight or something like that, but it's a good cause [and] good for the environment."

There are more than 20,700 registered EVs in Maryland, and the area also has an [electric taxi service](#) in need of more chargers for their business.

The gas station conversion was jointly funded by the Electric Vehicle Institute and the Maryland Energy Administration, which provided a grant of \$786,000.

Matthew Wade, EVI CEO, said the area has had issues with the supply of charging stations not meeting the demand of EVs. Takoma Park had just two chargers, one in a community center parking lot and the other at a street location.

"They were fully utilized throughout the day; people were lining up," Wade said. "The city was happy they were being used, but then they said, 'Wait, no one can get in this parking lot, because these taxis are using these chargers.'"



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Wade says the gas station layout, which is designed for flow traffic, will help alleviate that problem.

The station will feature four dispensers that connect to a high-powered, 200kW system. The system will allow four vehicles to charge simultaneously and reach 80% battery



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“[Maryland](#) is proud to be a national leader when it comes to clean and renewable energy, climate change and the promotion of electric infrastructure and vehicles,” said Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan in a release. “This fully converted gas-to-electric charging station is a prime example of our administration’s commitment to the environment and transportation.”

There are various approaches to EV charging infrastructure being rolled out across the U.S.

Elon Musk’s [Tesla](#) has more than 1,600 charging stations for its car owners across the country, and a total of near-15,000 chargers. Tesla has made changes to its supercharging fee model for car owners in recent years. After the company ended the free charging it had previously provided to new car owners, with Musk calling the offer “unsustainable,” Tesla reinstated the free charging this past August for new Model S and Model X owners. Tesla also offers the Powerwall system that allows car owners to generate and store electricity and charge their Tesla at home.

Some of the big automakers have developed their own EV charging business models. Volkswagen funded Electrify America as part of its investments in renewables made after its diesel emissions scandal.

There are also venture capital-based EV charging start-ups, such as ChargePoint, which says it plans to create as many as 2.5 million chargers by 2025. Other major private



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across the U.S. — and FLO, which offers both commercial and home-based EV charging systems.

EVI sees the station as a net positive for the community.

“Everyone gets behind it; it’s really neat,” Wade said. “It’s one of the few spaces out there that is not so divisive, and it gets people really excited.”

Correction: This story was updated to reflect that in August 2019, Tesla reinstated free supercharging for new owners of Model S and Model X cars. The story originally misstated this due to an editing error.

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