

# Where Should I Buy an EV?

## Data from the Center for Sustainable Energy Helps Us Identify EV-friendly Dealers

We regularly field inquiries from club members and others asking for dealer recommendations. Usually, it follows a negative interaction with a dealership, when they walked in mistakenly thinking their inquiry about purchasing an EV would be well received. Not so fast!

It has been well documented, in the [NY Times](#), in 2 [Sierra Club shopper studies](#), and other reporting, that many dealers are indifferent or even hostile to EVs. But there are *some* dealerships that make an effort to sell EVs. To help guide consumers interested in non-Tesla EVs, we obtained from the Center for Sustainable Energy (CSE), the consultant that manages the CHEAPR incentive program for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), the number of rebates by dealership from the program's inception in 2015 through August 11, 2020.

I am using rebates as a rough proxy for sales/EV-friendliness. It's the best we can do. You won't find retailers of expensive vehicles, for example, a Jag or an Audi, on this list because the cost of the vehicles exceeds the MSRP eligibility cap. Consumers are eligible for one rebate lifetime, so repeat customers are not included. Some dealers may end up on our list in spite of themselves. But we can still use this directionally. Tesla is not included since it doesn't have dealers.

We are covering a 5+ year period and understand that EV models come and go. Some manufacturers got out of the gate quickly

(Tesla, GM, Nissan), while others came later to the party. The Chevy Volt, once the most widely registered EV in the state, has been discontinued. A couple of years ago, Honda introduced a PHEV Clarity that generated a fair number of sales. Since then, it has greatly slowed, reportedly due to distribution having been curtailed. There have also been 5 changes made during this period made by DEEP to rebate size and the MSRP price cap that determines eligibility. Finally, some dealers have multiple stores that were not separated in this dataset.

## **One-Third of Dealerships have not Awarded a Single Rebate**

There are 270 franchised auto dealerships, according to their trade association (Connecticut Automotive Retailers Association) in CT. 185 of them have made a sale or lease associated with one or more rebates. Less than half, specifically 104, have disbursed 10 or more rebates and only 28, or about 10%, have awarded 50 or more rebates. (The denominator is somewhat inflated due to some dealers that don't retail eligible plug-ins.)

## **The Top EV Dealers**

These are the 5 dealers that have awarded more than 100 rebates.

- **A-1 Toyota (New Haven)**
- **Honda of Westport (Westport)**
- **Richard Chevrolet (Cheshire)**
- **Karl Chevrolet (New Canaan)**
- **Lynch Toyota (Manchester)**

Below are other top dealers for different makes that had between 50 and 100 rebates. Some makes haven't had any dealer exceed 50 rebates.

**GM** – Ingersoll Auto (Danbury), O’Neill’s Chevrolet/Buick (Avon), H&L Chevrolet (Darien), Maritime Chevrolet (Fairfield), Grossman Chevrolet/Nissan (Old Saybrook), Chevrolet of Milford (Milford), Partyka Chevrolet (Hamden).

**Toyota** – Hoffman Toyota (West Simsbury), New Country Toyota of Westport (Westport), Middletown Toyota (Middletown), Hartford Toyota Superstore (Hartford), Westbrook Toyota (Westbrook)

**Ford** – Steven’s Ford (Milford), Stamford Ford/Lincoln (Stamford), Crowley Ford/Lincoln (Plainville)

**Nissan** – Grossman Chevrolet Nissan (Old Saybrook), Harte Nissan (West Haven), Crowley Nissan (Bristol)

**BMW** – BMW of Ridgefield (Ridgefield), BMW of Bridgeport (Bridgeport)

Finally, 2 stores that handle numerous brands:

Valenti Auto Sales (multiple locations) – Audi, VW, Porsche, Maserati, Fiat, Volvo, Alpha Romeo, Jaguar. (We presume most of the rebates come from VW.)

MJ Sullivan Automotive Corner (New London) – Chevrolet, Buick, Cadillac, Hyundai, Genesis

It should be acknowledged that this is a changing landscape. We are relying on the past as prologue to predict EV-friendliness and we hope it proves useful. As the EV landscape evolves and new models are introduced, we will update the data to the extent that it is available. We anticipate it will be. Going forward, the CSE has advised they will be making more granular data available with their normal releases of CHEAPR data.