

Paul Pancella not only instructs and advises students in physics as a professor at Western Michigan University, he also practices what he teaches. Intrigued by the potential of human powered vehicles, the 1970s energy crisis and oil embargo, his interest in transportation efficiency accelerated. With the thermodynamic limitations of Internal Combustion Engines in mind, he built his own electric car.

When the gas engine on his 1992 Honda Civic gave up the ghost after nearly 200,000 miles in 2008, Paul was frustrated with the lack of commercial electric vehicles. Rather than buying another internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicle, he set out to convert the Civic to electric propulsion. First using salvaged nickel metal hydride batteries, and later upgrading to a lithium-ion battery pack, the Honda boasted >100 miles of range.

Paul drove the electrified Civic until 2016 when a combination of technical issues and improvements in the electric vehicle (EV) market made the change to a 2013 Nissan LEAF a more practical choice. He has since upgraded to a 2018 Chevy Bolt EV and recently added a Chevy Volt plugin hybrid.

Paul took advantage of the Consumers Energy **PowerMIDrive** program option to install a FleetCarma device that tracks his charging data as well as collect a \$200 rebate. As a technical person, he loves data and being able to track his usage patterns and savings by charging off-peak.

The growing DC Fast Charging infrastructure in Michigan and the surrounding states has enabled Paul and his family to take their Chevy Bolt EV on several road trips such as heading to St. Louis, Missouri to visit family.

Paul is all in on driving electric and loves promoting EVs in his role as president of the Southwest Michigan chapter of the [Electric Auto Association](#). If you come to EV car shows near Kalamazoo like the [National Drive Electric Week](#) events in September, you'll find him near his Bolt EV with the "infinite MPG" sign in the window.



Driver Profile

Paul Pancella

EV Model

Chevrolet Volt
Bolt EV

Longest EV Road Trip

Kalamazoo to St. Louis,
Missouri and back

