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FALL
2022

- TRAVEL** Extended-stay destinations for every taste
- HOME** Nine tips for a Greener home
- MOBILITY** Recycling EV batteries
- INSURANCE** How much insurance does your home need?
- DOSSIER** Adopting a dog or cat



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The entire magazine is available on CAAQUEBEC.COM. Follow us on social media to ask questions, consult our tips and advice pages, and interact with our community!

The importance of making smart consumer choices

Only together can we strive to be better consumers and to actively build an adaptive, more responsible future.



© CATH LANGLOIS PHOTOGRAPHE

Richard Lachance
President and CEO

In recent months, the evidence of a new economic reality is now wherever you turn. And it's normal, even desirable, for everyone to show concern – whether we're careful consumers or natural risk takers. Taming that sense of uncertainty is likely the best recipe for a thriving tomorrow. Prudence and a proactive stance will get us there.

Just like many other organizations, CAA-Quebec is facing uncertainty, labour shortages and rising operating costs. Since our business decisions are solidly anchored in our willingness to best serve our members, we continue to promote prudence first and foremost. At the same time, we believe that each constraint brings with it an opportunity to act, based on our determination to provide good choices for consumers.

Opportunities in turbulent times

In definitive terms, this means offering our employees new working methods to help them better balance their personal and professional lives. It means initiating a debate about commuting issues as we face record gas prices. We also must reinvent various ways of visiting the world and to better assist and support travellers.

This effort entails feeling confident that our offers and advantages are well adapted to today's priorities while anticipating future needs and concerns. It means being there when and where it counts, even when the turbulence is rough.

The one sure thing is that we will always act in the best interests of our members. We'll work hard every day to earn your trust and we'll remain proactive while we strengthen our network with valuable partners, as seriously affected as we are by economic turmoil.

Staying tuned in and daring to confront challenges

Always being on the lookout, in the face of these legitimate concerns, is essential for making a difference in a changing world. This is true for our members, employees and partners. It's also true for each of us, individually.

Only together can we strive to be better consumers and to actively build an adaptive, more responsible future.

No one has full control of what lies over the horizon, but we can choose what behaviour to adopt for taming uncertainties and contributing to our collective future.

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Photo contest



Winning photo

PADAR ISLAND, INDONESIA —→ While preparing for my 2019 trip, I made sure to book a ticket to visit this spectacular island. When the time came, however, I had to endure two days at sea on a boat so crowded there wasn't enough sleeping accommodation for everyone. I ended up spending a stormy night on the deck with two perfect strangers, sleeping on flimsy floor mats. The three of us became friends by morning when we witnessed the sunrise over Padar Island. That's the magic of travel: chance encounters intertwined with mythical landscapes. I'd do it again in a flash. What beautiful memories!

— MILA POIRIER, CARLETON-SUR-MER

Send your favourite vacation photo (maximum 5 megabytes) to CAAQUEBEC.COM/CAAQUEBECMAGAZINE before September 19, 2022, along with a description of roughly 80 words. You'll have the chance to see it published in the next issue, and earn 250 CAA Dollars.

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A WONDER FOR THE SENSES



The ship class that redefined cruising just got bolder. Because the biggest ship in the world, *Wonder of the Seas*SM, brings even bigger adventures to the award-winning Oasis Class. You can enjoy eight unique neighborhoods, including the all-new Suite Neighborhood. A totally redesigned pool deck with more ways to soak up the sun — or shade — than ever before. The most immersive AquaTheater ever, with a game-changing surround stage that makes you feel like part of the action. And the all-new PlayscapeSM, an underwater world studded with slides, climbing walls and games, where imaginations can soar. Plus returning Royal Caribbean® fan-favorites like the FlowRider® and Ultimate AbyssSM. The new Wonder of the Seas heads to postcard-perfect Caribbean shores starting November 2022.

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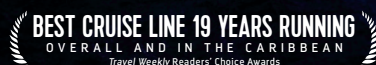
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News

Latest CAA-Quebec news and important things members need to know this fall.



Jean- Pierre Drewitt

Paul A. Pelletier

When passion and *savoir faire* lead to ... inspiration

CAA-Quebec's board of directors, senior management and employees say thank you in unison as they pay tribute to Jean-Pierre Drewitt and Paul A. Pelletier, whose mandates as board directors ended last April.

Over almost three decades, both directors have made a significant contribution to the growth of the organization, by generously sharing their managerial and entrepreneurial talents.

Jean-Pierre Drewitt, a business owner and director, served as Board Chairman from 2010 to 2013 and Audit Committee Chairman from 2003 to 2022.

Paul A. Pelletier was a board member for 13 years, including four as Board Chairman. He was also CAA-Quebec President and CEO from 1995 to 2012, during which time he played an instrumental role in the diversification of the organization's activities and membership growth.

Their passion and *savoir faire* are a secure and integral feature of CAA-Quebec's organizational culture.



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Boulevard de la Gappe



Avenue Sainte-Brigitte



Avenue Gourdeau

Worst Roads: The scoreboard

More than 8,500 people took the trouble to file a report on bad roads during this year's *Worst Roads* campaign, which finished at the end of May. Gatineau's Boulevard de la Gappe tops the list, but other roads on it also deserve attention, as determined by their rankings. Here are Quebec's top-ten worst roads. You'll find the rankings by region at CAAQUEBEC.COM.

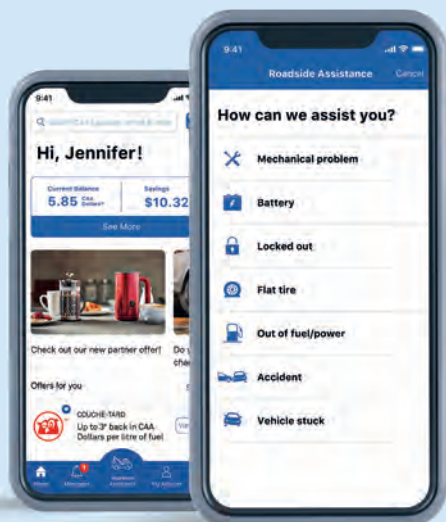
- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Boulevard de la Gappe,
Gatineau, Outaouais | 6 Avenue Gourdeau,
Saint-Agapit,
Chaudière-Appalaches |
| 2 Route du Vieux-Moulin,
Saint-Isidore,
Chaudière-Appalaches | 7 Avenue Saint-Sacrement,
Québec, Capitale-Nationale |
| 3 Boulevard du Curé-Labelle (route 117),
Saint-Jérôme, Laurentides | 8 Avenue Taniata,
Lévis, Chaudière-Appalaches |
| 4 Chemin Cook,
Gatineau, Outaouais | 9 Chemin Sainte-Foy,
Québec, Capitale-Nationale |
| 5 Avenue Sainte-Brigitte,
Sainte-Brigitte-de-Laval,
Capitale-Nationale | 10 Route 105,
Gatineau (MTQ),
Outaouais |

CAA-Quebec has forwarded these results to the relevant authorities so that appropriate action may be taken. Each year, a good many roads have been repaired following our intervention. This helps make the road network safer for all users: cyclists, pedestrians and motorists. To those who have participated, we say thank you!

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450-465-0620

GATINEAU

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819-778-2225

LAVAL

3131, boul. Saint-Martin Ouest
450-682-8100

LÉVIS

85, route du Président-Kennedy
418-624-8585

MONTREAL

1180, rue Drummond
514-861-5111

POINTE-CLAIRE

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514-426-2760

QUEBEC (LEBOURGNEUF)

500, rue Bouvier
418-624-8222

QUEBEC (SAINTE-FOY)

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418-653-9200

SAGUENAY (CHICOUTIMI)

1700, boul. Talbot
418-545-8686

SAINT-LÉONARD

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514-255-3560

SHERBROOKE

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4085, boul. des Récollets
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For more information and comments: INFO@CAAQUEBEC.COM

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Cellphone: *CAA

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Travel Agency

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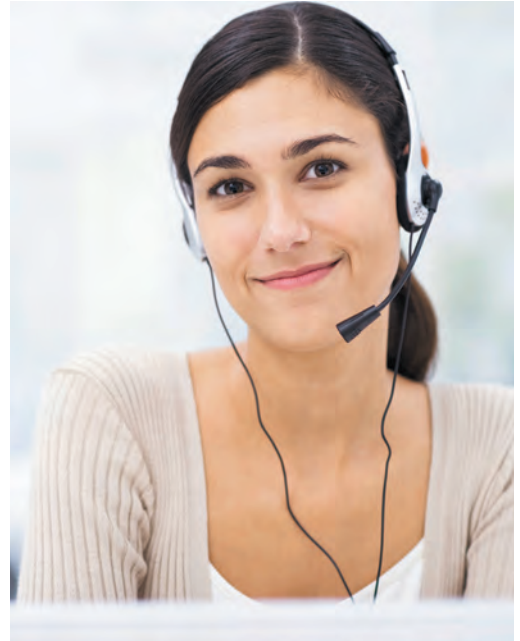
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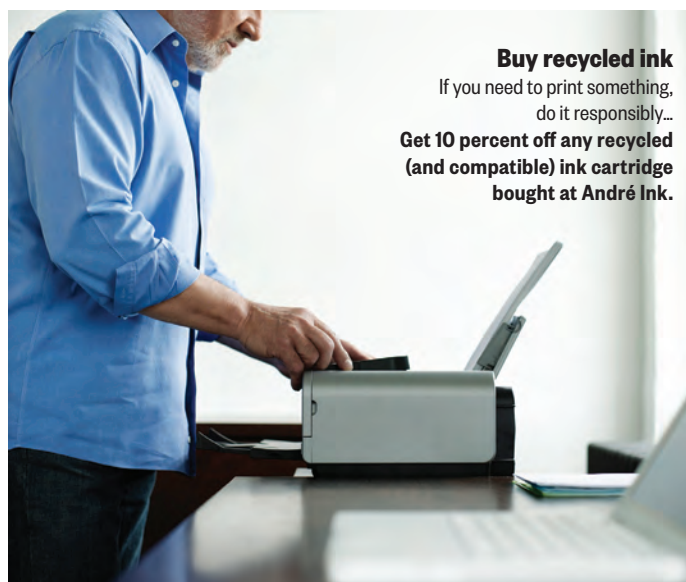
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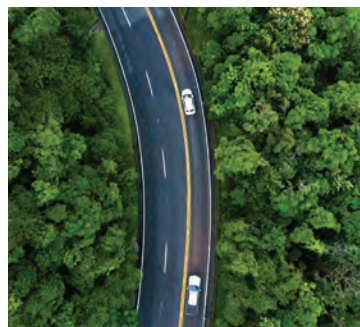
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See full offer details at caa.quebec.com. CAA-Quebec and its partners reserve the right to modify or terminate services and benefits at any time, in whole or in part, without notice.

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- *explore* Signature: Eight Remarkable Journeys
- Galápagos Islands: Nature at Its Most Intriguing

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Time to fulfill your travel dreams

With travelling abroad in full swing, the longing for faraway places is irrepressible. If your bucket list includes dream destinations like French Polynesia, the Galápagos Islands, Chile and Argentina, start packing. All aboard!

BY — CAROLYNE PARENT

French Polynesia: Bora Bora and other islands

Ah, Tahiti and its islands! You go there to live by the water, in a bungalow on stilts over a lagoon. And to check out local cultures, literally and figuratively.

Bora Bora – otherwise known as BOB, its airport code – is the undisputed gem of the five archipelagos that form the French Overseas Territory of French Polynesia. It is truly a unique natural phenomenon, defined by rugged terrain, unspoiled vegetation, lagoons of shimmering green hues, and rays swimming among magical coral reefs. Taha'a Island is another heart-stopper: An ancient volcano dominates most of the landscape, forcing its inhabitants to settle along a meandering ribbon of shoreline punctuated with deep bays. Taha'a is famous for both its vanilla plantations and its pearl farming.

Moorea Island is picturesque with many pastel-painted houses. It also has its share of *marae*, those ancient open-air Polynesian temples built for religious rituals. Surrounded by coral reefs, the Tuamotu Archipelago, including the Fakarava and Rangiroa atolls, will take your breath away. And if you're keen to scuba dive with lemon sharks, this is the place to be.

But first things first: After landing in Papeete, Tahiti's capital, take a night-time stroll along the harbour and visit the Musée de Tahiti et des Îles. You'll appreciate this otherworldly destination even more intimately.





The Galápagos Islands

UNESCO describes this archipelago and its richly diverse marine reserve as a one-of-a-kind “living museum and showcase of evolution.” In fact, during the 19th century, the Galápagos Islands were the biological motivator behind Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution.

Scattered around the equator some 1,000 kilometres off the coast of Ecuador, these volcanic islands are so remote that their extraordinary plant and animal species are endemic and found nowhere else on Earth. Here, you’ll discover a veritable lunar landscape, carved out by volcanic activity and the effects of erosion, where flora and fauna – like lava cacti, marine iguanas, blue-footed boobies, flightless cormorants and giant tortoises – thrive.

The astonishing world beneath the ocean’s surface should not be neglected either. Snorkelling is a great way to explore the strange “submarine reliefs” (features found on the ocean floor). It’s a magical universe all on its own, to be approached and treated with the care and environmental respect it richly deserves.



To visit these dream destinations, consult the *explore Signature* 2022-2023 brochure at CAAQUEBEC.COM/VOYAGE, or contact a CAA-Quebec Travel Counsellor.



Atacama Desert



Sunset over Buenos Aires

Chile and Argentina: spectacular landscapes

In these two South American countries, you'll find anything and everything, even when the two notions appear to conflict: sand deserts and icefields, frenzied tango rhythms and the proverbial "silence of the Pampas," nature tamed and untamed (hello, Iguazú Falls).

Sandwiched between the Andes Mountains and the Pacific Ocean and stretched out over 4,000 kilometres, Chile is a land of unusual geographical diversity. To the north is the Atacama Desert, one of the driest areas on the face of the Earth. To the south lies Chilean Patagonia, renowned for soaring mountains and massive icefields. The capital city of Santiago rises in the centre of the country wedged between vineyards, wineries and holiday resorts.

Argentina has similar attributes. Populated during the second half of the 19th Century by hundreds of thousands of French, Italian, Spanish and other immigrants, its capital city of Buenos Aires is charming. Winemaking in the northern province of Mendoza evokes the same spirit as the tango does in the capital: a way of life.

Another memorable experience would be criss-crossing the Tierra del Fuego National Park by boat. Between Punta Arenas, Chile, and Ushuaia, Argentina, via the mythical Cape Horn, this route is pure enchantment, punctuated with unusual panoramas populated by elephant seals and Magellanic penguins. A disorienting change of scenery!



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Extended-stay destinations for every taste

From the Mediterranean to the Caribbean, snowbirds now have any number of warm-weather options. Here are a few getaway ideas.

BY — NATHALIE DE GRANDMONT

To find the right destination and travel package, it's important to identify the kind of climate, ambiance and activity you would most enjoy. Once you've made that choice – temperate or tropical, arts and culture, sports or gastronomy, apartment or house – you can relax and fine-tune your research.



Îles des Saintes, Guadeloupe

© CHANTAL LAPONTE

The French Caribbean

It's getting much easier to fly to Martinique and Guadeloupe from Quebec. These so-called pearls of the French West Indies hold great appeal for sun-seekers with a tropical climate, luxuriant vegetation and fabulous beaches. Add to these attractions a variety of water activities, and visitors can take advantage of both sea and sun. There are also mountain hiking trails, exotic gardens, cultural sites, artisanal rum shops and colourful covered markets. Short-term house rentals are available, ideal for those keen on living (and shopping) like a local. French is the official language, laced with a charming Creole accent. Cost of living: comparable to that in France. \$\$\$



Menton, the lemon capital of the Côte d'Azur

Côte d'Azur, France

Beside the irresistible colour of the water lapping its shores, the Côte d'Azur offers an easygoing lifestyle thanks to a mild climate and a profusion of congenial amenities like open-air markets, art museums, shops, cafés and restaurants – all exuding a distinct aura of French chic and art of living. Such pleasures are palpable in the cities of Cannes and Nice, extending to those charming perched villages in the *arrière-pays*. Cost of living: slightly higher than in Quebec. \$\$\$



Agadir, one of Morocco's hidden gems

Morocco and Tunisia

Neighbouring countries Morocco and Tunisia – one bordering the Atlantic, the other, the Mediterranean – are located in the temperate-and-dry zone. Both countries are blessed with spectacular landscapes like the Sahara Desert, the Atlas Mountains and a multitude of ancient Roman sites. Souks are an interesting feature to explore: colourful marketplaces selling wares ranging from spices to handicrafts, clothes, jewellery, carpets, and so on. (And while there, be sure to try a cup of Maghrebi mint tea.) Resort hotels typically offer full-board and half-board packages. They feature fabulous cuisine combining exquisite spices and tantalising aromas. Cost of living: very affordable. \$



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Algarve, Portugal

Lesser known perhaps than Spain, neighbouring Portugal has its own charm and appeal. Snowbirds are particularly attracted to the temperate climate of the Algarve. There's plenty to admire and keep you busy: strolling along the beaches and creeks of Albufeira, playing golf on any of the many courses, just meandering through nearby villages, visiting centuries-old castles and monasteries, savouring a glass of Port to top off the day. There is a wide variety of accommodation, including apartment-hotels (some with a half-board option). Cost of living: among the most affordable in Western Europe. \$\$



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TRAVEL INSURANCE

Choosing the right coverage

Now more than ever, having travel insurance is vital even for a short hop outside the province. As there are many possibilities, here are some pointers to find exactly what you need.

BY — NATHALIE DE GRANDMONT

Ensure appropriate basic coverage

Most travellers are familiar with emergency medical care insurance, designed to protect them in case they are involved in an accident or suffer a sudden, unforeseen illness while travelling. “To ensure adequate coverage, aim for at least \$1 million Canadian,” advises Suzanne Michaud, CAA-Quebec Vice-President – Insurance. As limits and exclusions vary widely from one company to another, Michaud suggests doing your homework to find out exactly what works for you in terms of destination and planned activities.



Get insurance for all your needs

Once basic coverage is decided, consider adding other types of protection to your policy. A trip-cancellation and trip-interruption plan will reimburse you for: (a) any trip prepaid amounts should something unexpected occur (an accident, death of a loved one, or other crisis) forcing you to cancel it before departure; or (b) any unforeseen expenses should you be obliged to interrupt your trip. Baggage insurance protects you against theft, damage and loss of your luggage or other personal effects. And then there's the self-explanatory rental vehicle damage insurance. CAA-Quebec Deputy Insurance Director Nadia Goyette explains, “These insurance options can be purchased separately or in a comprehensive, multi-risk package (medical care, baggage, trip cancellation, trip interruption). Another possibility is to enhance a policy with endorsements to cover, for example, a pre-existing medical condition or risky sports activities (like hand-gliding, mountain climbing, scuba diving, hot-air ballooning) generally not covered in standard insurance policies.”



Give yourself peace of mind

If you plan to make more than two trips a year (including short getaways south of the border), a multi-trip annual policy will prove to be an advantage, still more so because your policy can be customized in terms of trip duration (like for 7, 10, or 15 days) and enhanced with endorsements as needed to cover stays longer than already specified. As such, this type of insurance can also suit the needs of snowbirds and offer them comprehensive coverage for the entire length of their sojourn abroad.

Credit card travel insurance is a welcome benefit, of course, but the coverage provided may not be sufficient for your needs. So, it's important to check a few points. Are family members and friends travelling with you also covered? Can a traveller's age and health status have an impact on coverage? What is the coverage period and its total amount? Answers to these questions will help you decide if you need to buy extra insurance or enhance the policy offered by your credit card.

Travel insurance comes in many forms to suit all needs – à la carte, as a package or enhanced with endorsements. “Essentially what you buy is peace of mind,” says Goyette. There's no better way to ensure a wonderful vacation!

— To know more, watch the free online (in French only) presentation “Travel insurance: More important than ever” hosted by Suzanne Michaud, CAA-Quebec Vice-President – Insurance, at CAAQUEBEC.COM/FOR_YOUR_INSURANCE.

Insurance 101

Insurance coverage for your offspring

At some point, teenagers will become young adults and the subject of insurance inevitably arises. These youngsters will have to think about getting insurance when they move into their own place (at university, for instance), travel alone for the first time or start playing a potentially dangerous sport.

Keep in mind, however, that your own home insurance may already cover your child for certain items, like their new living quarters, or the injury or material damage they might unintentionally cause others. If that's the case, then there's no need to pay twice. Of course, your child must meet certain criteria for such coverage to take effect: They must not exceed a stipulated age limit, but must be a full-time student and be your dependent or that of your spouse.

If travelling alone, your child will be covered by your annual travel insurance policy, which may include emergency medical care. But it will only apply if you had opted for coverage that includes immediate family members. Here again, there may be certain restrictions at play, like an age-limit caveat.

With regard to accident insurance, family coverage includes yourself and your children, who may also be required by their university to purchase their own insurance as a result of their field of study (such as woodworking, policing or fire-fighting) or the sports or leisure activities (like football or cheerleading) in which they participate.





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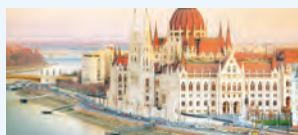




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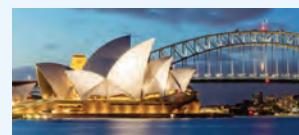
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**MEMBER
TESTIMONIAL**

Don't head south without Patricia's input

These days, scuba-diving enthusiast Micheline Gaudette entrusts her travel plans to none other than “her Patricia” who, she declares, breathes professionalism and a passion for her work.

In the past, Gaudette may well have felt content with the services of other agents. But now she only has eyes for the Brossard Travel Centre's Patricia Bombardier. “Even though we mostly discuss all-inclusive resorts like Club Med, which offers a secure environment for scuba diving, Patricia always takes the time to offer us advice to make sure our chosen packages match our needs and expectations,” says Gaudette.

Gaudette usually travels with her sister, who copes with a physical disability, and she herself has had trouble walking for some years now. “Patricia always makes sure our hotel is suitably adapted and comfortable, that our rooms are well located for us to come and go easily. And she double-checks on everything, up until departure time.”

Beside health issues, Patricia Bombardier also worries about her client's budget. “Once she cancelled our booking to Cancún and replaced it with another that was more affordable,” Gaudette remembers. “It even occurred to her to book our scuba-diving activities so we could prepay in Canadian dollars, rather than having to pay at the site in U.S. dollars. And what's more, during the pandemic, she made sure our Club Med memberships stayed valid so we wouldn't lose any privileges.”

Positive, enthusiastic, competent, quick-witted and caring about her clients: Patricia Bombardier stands out. No wonder Gaudette, her sister and their spouses have relied on her exclusively to plan their trips – seven at last count, including one scheduled for next year, to Club Med Turquoise, which they'll visit for the fourth time.



Has CAA-Quebec been there for you?

Email your story to CAAQUEBECMAGAZINE@CAAQUEBEC.COM. It might appear in the next “Member Testimonial” column and earn you **250 CAA Dollars!**

“You can see that she loves her work,” Gaudette gushes. “We particularly appreciate the quality of her follow-ups. She answers all our questions and looks into things as called for. After each trip, she wants our comments. And, of course, we are more than happy to oblige.”

What more can we say? Thank you, Patricia, for demonstrating the CAA-Quebec Travel values so well.

And thank you, Micheline Gaudette, for your trust and loyalty!

BRINGING HOME A NEW PET

For a happy beginning



Thinking about a puppy or a kitten? How exciting! But before you bring your little ball of fluff home, there are some things you need to know. Here's advice for a stress-free experience.

BY — LYNE BOISVERT

The perfect pet

Start by asking the right questions, such as “Why do I want a pet?”, “Is it for the kids or because I’m bored?”, “Is anyone in the family allergic?” Michel Pepin, veterinarian and the small animal division communications coordinator at the Quebec veterinarian association (AMVQ), has some valuable advice: “Don’t decide to get a pet on a whim. You need to consider your needs, your living situation, your lifestyle, and, most importantly, your budget. Be sure you can afford it!” Based on his own in-clinic observations, Dr. Pepin estimates that, depending on the species, a pet can cost \$20,000 to \$30,000 over their lifetime.

Steps to adoption

Once you’ve chosen the type of pet you want, find out everything you can about the breeder or private seller you have in mind. Do your research and ask for references and a guarantee of good health. Reputable breeders often have a wait list of more than two years. Thinking about visiting a shelter to adopt a rescue pet? That’s great! But no matter where you go to adopt your pet, make sure you have a socialization and training plan in place to avoid or correct any undesirable behaviours your pet may have.

Home at last

Before you bring your pet home, put dangerous or fragile objects out of reach. This includes plants (some are poisonous), power cords, knick-knacks, and so on. Show your pet their bowls, bed, and toys right away. You want to make them feel at home. Make an appointment with the vet within a week. Your pet needs a health assessment, vaccinations, and possibly a parasite treatment.



Insurance just for pets

Quebec dog and cat owners are just beginning to discover the importance of pet insurance, a fast-growing and popular investment. If your pet is sick or injured, it’s important to know you’ll be able to afford having them treated. Dr. Pepin explains: “Vet fees are going up in step with the cost of equipment, wages, and rent. That’s why I strongly recommend pet insurance.”

Socializing and training your pet

While cats are quick learners when it comes to hygiene, it can take up to six months to toilet train a dog. Start by offering a reward when your pet does their business in the right place. Socialize your pet by having them groomed and walking them on a leash. Introduce them to car travel as soon as possible. You might also consider a doggy daycare or a dog trainer. But hold on! Unvaccinated dogs should be kept away from dog parks, because some diseases are transmissible.

Naming your dog or cat

Feeling uninspired when it comes to naming your pet? Check out these fun names seen recently at the vet’s office: Chairman Meow, Dolly Purrton, Feline Dion, Meatball, Cat Stevens. This year, we predict the names “Covid” and “Guy Lafleur” will be popular!





Choosing a veterinarian

Ask friends and neighbours for a referral. Keep business hours and proximity to home in mind, and make sure the vet inspires confidence. Rates vary by location (urban or rural) and are based on the type of service (e.g., emergency care).

Tips from a vet

Michel Pepin shares some important reminders:

- Insist on seeing your pet's parents at the breeder's facility. You're more likely to have a healthy pet and less likely to be dealing with a puppy mill, where profit comes before animal well-being.
- Under the *Animal Pedigree Act*, it is illegal to sell a purebred dog if the breed is not one that has been determined in accordance with scientific genetic principles.
- Keep your dog away from chocolate (especially dark chocolate), grapes, cannabis, macadamia nuts, bread dough, detergents, medications, and garbage bins!
- A sudden or gradual loss of appetite or interest may mean your pet is sick. It could be serious, so see the vet right away.
- Dog training methods have changed over the years. Today, the emphasis is on encouragement rather than punishment. Reward your dog for positive behaviour. Offer treats and show them plenty of love as well.



Travel with a pet

Before leaving on vacation with your pet, check whether animals are allowed at the hotel or campsite and the places you want to visit. Remember, to avoid heatstroke you must never leave your pet unattended in a car. Get them microchipped and have your home address and cell number engraved on their collar or on a tag.

For travel by plane, you'll need a crate. Make sure your pet is accustomed to it before you set off. Find out about the pet travel requirements for your airline (cabin or hold) and the country you're visiting. Often a health certificate, vaccination record, and microchip are mandatory. Know what your travel insurance or pet insurance covers.

For travel by car, your pet must be restrained in a harness or in a crate firmly secured with a seat belt on the back seat. Do not let your dog ride with their head out the window. They could be injured by flying stones or stung by an insect. Stop every three hours so your pet can pee and have a drink of water. Once you've arrived at your destination, find out where the nearest veterinarian's office is.

Did you know?

CAA-Quebec offers The Assistant for pet health with our home insurance policies. It's a free service that lets you talk to an animal health technician or a veterinarian about your pet's health.

CAA-Quebec members receive an exclusive a 12-percent discount on the premium for *Pet Plus Us* pet insurance, a CAA-Quebec partner. To obtain a quote, visit the *For Your Insurance* section of CAAQUEBEC.COM.

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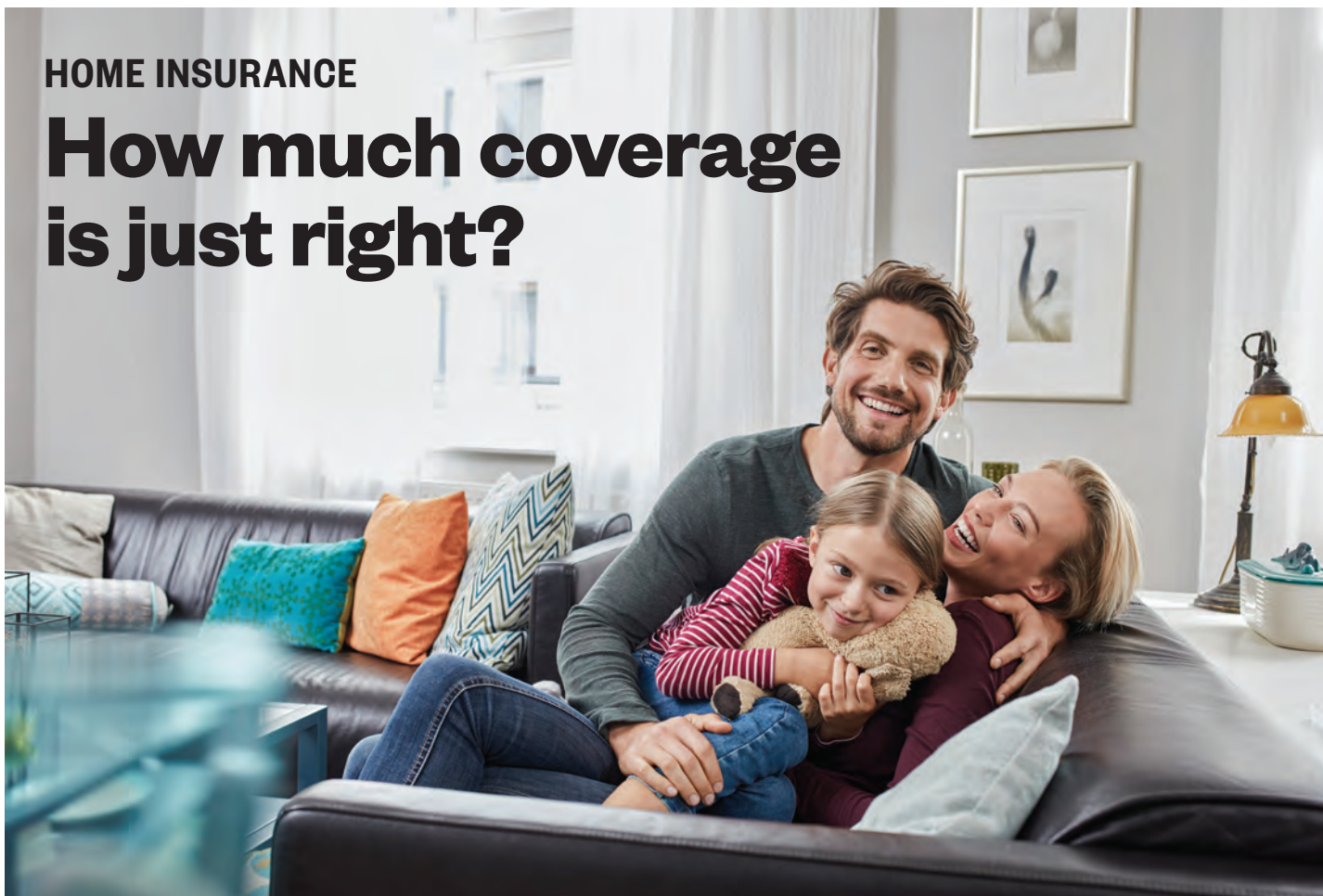
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HOME INSURANCE

How much coverage is just right?



Does your current policy suit all your needs? How can you determine the right amount of coverage while avoiding over- or under-insuring? Would a million dollars be too much or too little? **BY — JACQUELINE SIMONEAU**

What does home insurance cover?

In addition to protecting your property and assets against losses due to theft, fire, vandalism and so on, home insurance normally includes a civil-liability clause covering property damage and personal injury that you or anyone living under your roof might involuntarily cause to others. Examples: You accidentally hurt someone on the golf course, your daughter used and damaged her friend's bicycle, your dog bit a delivery man who was on your doorstep.

How to calculate the coverage amounts you need?

Your insurer will need two main types of information: the cost of replacing your assets and that of rebuilding your house. The best way to estimate the total value of your belongings is to create an inventory. List the items kept in each room of your house – including the garage and garden shed – complete with as many relevant details as possible (like purchase date, brand, model, current replacement cost). Also, take photos or videos of them. You can download the *Room-by-room inventory of your property* form at CAAQUEBEC.COM or other customizable inventory templates from the internet. Keep the document in a safe place outside your home. Finally, if you've acquired a valuable new item, don't forget to add it to your list.

As for the cost of rebuilding your house, it's best to get an estimate from a professional appraiser. Alternatively, your insurer may calculate the value using factors like the building's age and the quality of materials used, among other criteria.



What other factors can influence premium rates?

Insurance coverage is assessed based on risk levels. In other words, the probability that claims will be made. Factors that could increase or decrease the premiums you pay include: the area where you live (some cities or regions are more prone to natural disasters – like flooding or earthquakes – than others), the crime rate in the neighbourhood (risk of theft and burglary), the age and construction of your house (condition; quality of materials used; square footage; plumbing, electrical and heating systems; home-security devices; distance to a fire hydrant or fire station), municipal infrastructure (risks of sewer backup). Add-ons (fireplace, pool, hot tub, outdoor spa) certainly cost more to insure. On the other hand, you could qualify for discounts if you're a non-smoker, have no mortgage or no claim history. And by increasing the deductible (the amount you are responsible for paying in case of a claim), you could reduce the premiums still further.

Why is additional protection necessary?

All home-insurance policies have limits and exclusions. Sewer backup and water infiltration through the foundation, for example, are typically not covered. So, if you believe you are at risk, take additional protective measures in the form of endorsements, if only for peace of mind. Also check with your insurer regarding valuable items (such as jewellery, expensive sports equipment and artwork) as they may be subject to coverage limits.



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Furthermore, GardaWorld Security Systems offers 5 percent off residential alarm system packages, applicable to 36- and 60-month contracts.

Is a million-dollar coverage really common practice?

Civil-liability insurance typically guarantees coverage of \$1 million. This amount is by no means excessive and might not even be enough. In fact, civil-liability or third-party damage can lead to very costly claims or lawsuits. For example, what if you accidentally set fire to a friend's residence and the owner and other neighbours decide to sue.

TIP FROM THE PROS —→ **Take time to shop around. Get at least two or three quotes. When comparing the quotes, make sure that the parameters – premiums, deductibles, levels of protection and so on – correspond to the same elements from one quote to another.**



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HEAT PUMPS

A smart choice, both for the environment and the pocketbook



Did you know that a heat pump ensures maximum home comfort year-round?

It cools your home in the summer as efficiently as it heats it in winter – all while saving you money on electricity bills. It's a win-win!

In winter, the heat pump's high performance is remarkable, especially when compared to other conventional heating systems. It can be up to three times more efficient than electric baseboards, for example, potentially reducing your energy costs by up to 35 percent.

Act now and get financial assistance

Hydro-Québec's Efficient Heat Pump Program can help you make the switch. Since February 2021, more than 45,000 participants have taken advantage of the program.

"Heat pumps are among the most efficient of all heating systems (like furnaces and electric baseboards). They give the most heat for the same amount of energy consumed. It's also an excellent way to make your home more energy-efficient."

— HYDRO-QUÉBEC



Receive up to \$2,800* in financial assistance

To obtain financial assistance, you must choose a model from the Hydro-Québec list of eligible heat pumps. The pump must be purchased in Quebec and installed by a qualified contractor in an eligible dwelling, such as a single-family home, a plex or a multi-unit residential building.

There are two models: central heat pump (with ducts), and wall-mounted heat pump (ductless). Both are eligible. The key factor is that the device must be the right size for your needs.

9

tips for a Greener home

No need to change your daily habits to help save the planet. Here are 9 eco-responsible gestures that will get you started.

BY — JACQUELINE SIMONEAU

01 — Opt for energy-efficient appliances

When the time comes to replace your home appliances, choose those with *Energy Star* tags. They are at least 10 percent more energy-efficient than standard models and they also limit greenhouse gas emissions.

02 — Adopt LED lighting

Replace incandescent light bulbs with LED bulbs. According to Hydro-Québec, this simple decision will reduce your energy costs by 70 to 90 percent. Also, LED bulbs are 15 times longer lasting, saving you still more money.

03 — Use Green flooring

Materials like cork, bamboo, ceramic tiles, concrete or linoleum are ecological and renewable.

04 — Redecorate with second-hand finds

Always opt for natural, reusable or recycled materials. Don't discard items you no longer need, but sell or donate them instead.



05 — Limit water consumption

If your toilet needs replacing, buy a dual-flush unit, designed to use less water for flushing liquid waste than solid. And look for products with *WaterSense*® and *MaP* labels, certifying that they meet the desired criteria for water efficiency and performance. A low-flow showerhead (7.6 L/min) and a faucet aerator (5.7 L/min) will further reduce bathroom water consumption by 20 to 30 percent.

06 — Heat smartly

Install programmable or smart thermostats: They are effective in controlling your home temperatures and managing energy use. You'll reduce your energy bills and carbon footprint at the same time. Or think about getting a heat pump for maximum comfort.

07 — Switch to high-efficient doors and windows

According to Natural Resources Canada, *Energy Star*-certified doors and windows are 15 percent more energy-efficient. And you could qualify for government financial assistance for installing them. Be sure to check out eligibility requirements.



08 — Procure allies for your garden

Use a rain barrel and a composter in your garden. Both of these are sold at big-box or hardware stores. Collected rainwater can be used on house plants as well as the lawn and garden and the composter reduces the amount of garbage sent to the landfill by turning food and garden waste into fertilizer.

09 — Avoid VOC paints

Conventional wall paints contain volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that are bad for your health and the environment. Opt for VOC-free or low-VOC paints and stains. Another viable option is water-based recycled paints.



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Preparing your garden for winter

The question is not when but *precisely* when to tuck in the garden ahead of the colder months. Isabelle Arseneault, special projects manager at Pépinière Éco-Verdure, provides the following tips for ensuring a tip-top garden come spring.

BY — JACQUELINE SIMONEAU

Shrubs and conifers

Spread a layer of mulch at the base of wind-exposed shrubs, leaving adequate clearance around the stems. Mulch insulates against the cold and sudden temperature swings while also retaining snow moisture in the soil itself. To prevent the needles/foliage from browning, water conifers and evergreen shrubs thoroughly before the first frost kicks in.

Trees and shrubs don't require winter protection, "unless they're particularly fragile plants or are located in an area exposed to blowing wind or drifting snow," says Arseneault. However, it is important to wait until the leaves have fallen off – generally in mid-November – before twining them up or wrapping them with burlap or an Arbotex-type material.

Perennials

If you plan to prune them in the fall, Arseneault recommends cutting them down to 7 to 10 centimetres high (3 to 4 inches). "But I'd wait until spring to cut the tall grasses because they're ornamental and also provide food for birds in winter." Arseneault also suggests using compost rather than synthetic fertilizer in the fall. "Compost feeds both the plants and the soil," she explains.



Lawn

September is the prime time to spread new seeds over bare or sparse lawn areas: Replace the soil in those spots with a new soil-compost mixture before scattering the seeds. And don't forget to rake away or shred any dead leaves so they won't block light or water from reaching the grass. At the first sign of ground frost, mow the grass a final time – to a height of about five centimetres (two inches). Then remove the clippings and allow the lawn to breathe.

Bulbs

Spring-blooming bulbs (like tulips, hyacinths and daffodils) are planted in the fall, before the first frost. The planting depth should be three times the length of the bulb.

— To ensure you won't miss anything, consult the *Seasonal Home Maintenance Guide* in the *At Home* section of CAAQUEBEC.COM.



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For free, unlimited and customized advice on home maintenance, contact CAA-Quebec Residential Advisory Services. You'll also get 3 percent off the invoice amount, up to a maximum of \$100, when choosing a CAA-Quebec Approved Residential Supplier.

Mobility

Road safety is vital. Driving carefully and responsibly is everyone's business. We inform and advise you on mobility as autumn approaches.

The profession of driving monitor/instructor is widely viewed as...

REWARDING —> Because you contribute to road safety by training drivers to become responsible, self-reliant, prudent and cooperative.

ENRICHING —> Training is the core part of the journey – driving, after all, is a serious business.

IDEAL FOR PEOPLE WHO ENJOY DRIVING —> In fact, the profession has great appeal among former truckers, delivery drivers or policemen who are used to flexible hours.

REQUIRING GOOD LISTENING SKILLS —> A good in-vehicle monitor must also be calm, enjoy people as well as the chance to share acquired knowledge, and to top it off, be an effective teacher and communicator.

ENJOYING THE SOCIAL GIVE-AND-TAKE —> Meeting and exchanging ideas with future drivers.

HAVING THE ABILITY TO TAKE THE JOB A STEP FURTHER —> Eventually becoming a full-fledged instructor, qualified to dispense theoretical training.



BEING CAPABLE OF FOCUSING AND DEALING WITH STRESS —> The reward appears every time a student overcomes their initial hesitation and masters a tricky manoeuvre. This culminates in the ultimate satisfaction of being there when the student obtains their permit.

Driving in school zones: there's still more to be done

A new CAA road-safety survey in these vulnerable zones shows that Quebec leads the country in this field thanks to combined efforts by province-wide road-safety partners. By comparing and scoring provincial and territorial practices, the study indicates that much more can and should be done to improve matters. It's a challenge that CAA-Quebec and its foundation shoulder on a daily basis, mainly through its primary-school safety patrol program. Canadian schoolchildren remain vulnerable to traffic accidents. Between 2015 and 2019, 1,900 students suffered injuries and 19 were killed as they walked or cycled to and from school. So our efforts are far from over. Consult the survey in the *News* section of CAAQUEBEC.COM.



After 10 years, Quebecers still ignore the move-over law

In Canada, the law says that when an emergency vehicle, tow truck or surveillance vehicle has stopped and its yellow arrow signal, flashing or rotating light is activated, you must slow down and move away safely. Failure to comply is liable to result in fines of \$200 to \$300 (plus fees) and four demerit points. And yet, the number of tickets issued for not respecting the law in Quebec has risen by 25 percent in the past five years. So, CAA-Quebec strongly urges all its members to ensure the safety of first responders – including our very own patrollers – and follow the move-over law.



Approved Auto Repair Services: well wired for an electric future

Considering the ongoing auto electrification in Quebec and the government-announced ban on new gas-powered car sales by 2035, demands to service electric vehicles (EVs) can only increase over time.

A pioneer in EV-maintenance-and-repair safe practices, CAA-Quebec actively encourages its AARS facilities to train their staff in everything about EVs and hybrids.

A growing number of garages have already signed up for the EV Skill Certification Program developed by the Parity Committee of the Automotive Services Industry (CPA) in partnership with CAA-Quebec. This program aims to train and certify mechanics in electric-and-hybrid-vehicle maintenance and repair.

A garage with certified-EV mechanics on duty will be awarded a certificate to be displayed in the shop. A special note will also appear next to that garage's name in the AARS-facilities list posted on the CAA-Quebec website. If you need recommendations, contact our Automotive Advisory Services.

Our vision of electric mobility

CAA-Quebec has “gone electric” for many years now, offering all manner of assistance like EV training for mechanics, EV test drives at annual Montreal and Quebec City auto shows, and EV-battery inspection workshops. What's more, its Rabais Dollars Program includes partners offering discounts on a range of EV products and services like insurance and the purchase or installation of charging stations.

— Discover our range of EV advice and services in the **Electric Mobility** section of CAAQUEBEC.COM.

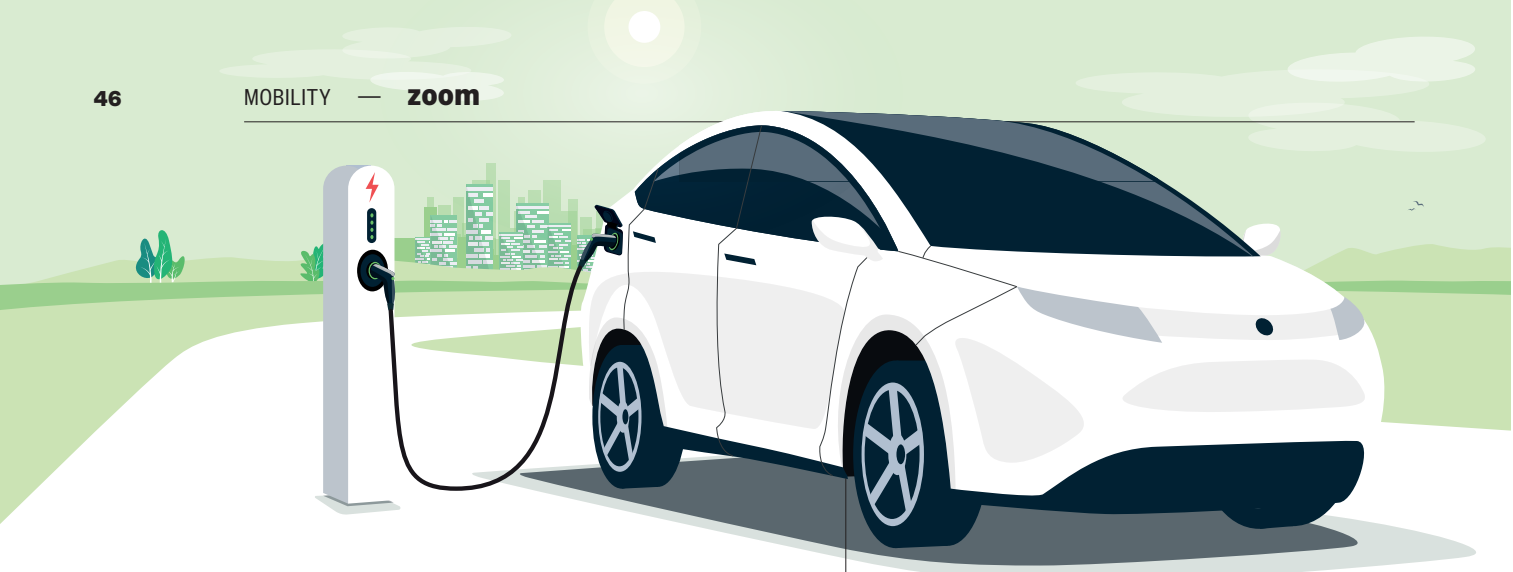


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Alternative fuel sources for cars

With soaring gas prices, many drivers now wonder if alternative fuels actually exist or are in development for combustion engines. The answer to both questions is yes.

BY — JULIE PERREAULT

Propane

In some countries, the United Kingdom in particular, hybrid cars are factory-designed to run on propane. This is not yet the case here. You would have to convert your car for propane use, at a cost varying between companies from \$5,500 to \$6,500. But the investment can be recouped through the savings you'll make on fuel – just how quickly will depend on how often and how far you drive each day, week, month or year. Incidentally, in May 2022, Natural Resources Canada estimated that the price of propane was 33 percent lower than gasoline. There are currently some 135 propane-fuelling stations in Quebec.

Ethanol

Ethanol is a renewable biofuel with environmental and economic advantages. It is made from crops like corn, wheat or barley as well as from biomass (organic solid waste or forest residues, for example). In Canada, ethanol is used as an additive in other fuel sources to help reduce greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions. Petroleum companies currently add 5 to 10 percent ethanol to their regular gasoline, increasing the proportion to 15 percent by the end of the decade. Most vehicles, 10 years old or less, run smoothly on this amalgam.

Electricity

If you have recently acquired an electric vehicle or plug-in hybrid, you must be happy with your choice, especially during the past few months. Hydro-Québec calculations, based on April 2022 prices, show that the electricity required to drive 20,000 kilometres per year in an EV cost \$470. By comparison, the cost of gasoline to drive the same distance, at \$1.90 a litre, was six times that figure. Just do the math using the current gas price!

Hydrogen

Driving a hydrogen-powered car is very similar to driving a fully electric model, except that the former doesn't need charging. You just drive up to a station and refill your tank the same way you would a gasoline-fuelled car. It takes 5 to 10 minutes to fill up a tank that offers a driving range of 500 to 600 kilometres, just like a combustion vehicle. Hydrogen-powered cars leave no GHG tailpipe emissions behind, only water vapour.

To qualify as a Green fuel solution, hydrogen must be produced from clean, renewable sources such as water and electricity. Public hydrogen-fuelling stations are few and far between in Canada – only one in Quebec City and three or four in the Vancouver region – making this alternative fuel marginal at best. It has, however, attracted some interest from the heavy-duty truck industry which faces major challenges with electric-vehicle battery packs.

Synthetic fuels

A little over a year ago, Porsche announced it was working on a synthetic fuel it called “eFuel.” In partnership with Siemens Energy, the German car manufacturer has developed a process that captures carbon dioxide directly from the air and then combines it with hydrogen, itself produced by water electrolysis. The result is a CO₂-neutral synthetic methanol that can be used in any gasoline-fuelled vehicle.

The one drawback is that the fuel has yet to be commercialized. Porsche has indicated that eFuel production, at a plant still under construction in Chile, will yield 130,000 litres this year, increasing to 55 million litres by 2024 and 550 million litres by 2026.

In short, options may not be numerous but they do exist. And these alternative fuels, out of our reach for now, will be available within a few years. Until then, the best course of action is to keep driving costs down. The *You asked us* article on the next page will show you how to do just that.



CAA-Quebec Members

Experts at CAA-Quebec Automotive Advisory Services are available to answer your questions about electric vehicles, new technologies and ways to reduce your fuel consumption. Don't hesitate to contact them.

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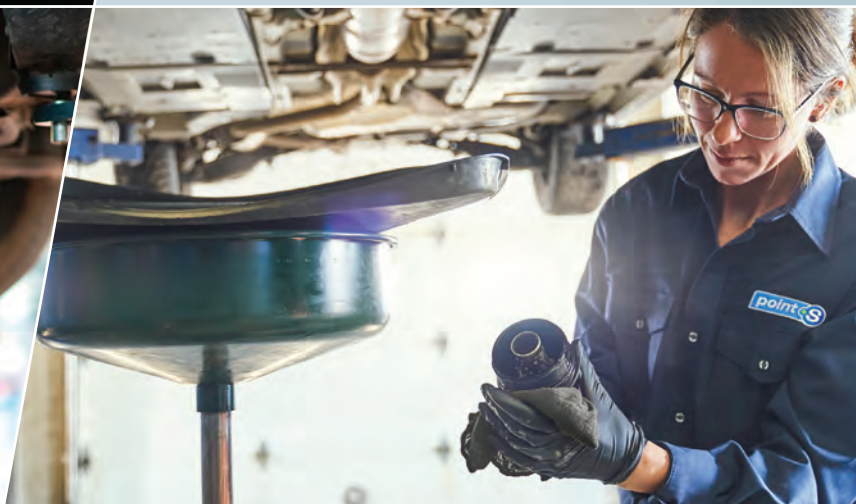
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Remove unnecessary cargo like luggage or bike racks, for example.

You asked us

Liliane Langevin, of Trois-Rivières, asks if driving in “eco mode” really saves on gas.

It’s a timely question, given the current gas prices. Here are the facts.

Eco Mode (EM) is present in many car models, complete with an activation push-button on the dash or steering wheel. When EM is activated – don’t forget to turn it on – the engine computer maximizes fuel efficiency by altering specific features, such as:

- lowering the transmission speed;
- reducing engine power; and
- reducing throttle response.

You will realize that EM is more efficient on city streets than on highways where speed is constant.

But as a recent *Consumer Reports* study indicates, “Eco Mode is not a magic button that will instantly save fuel.” If you activate EM and then hit the gas to compensate, it would be futile. Let’s all agree that EM facilitates and encourages frugal driving behaviour.

How to get the best fuel economy

PLAN YOUR TRAVEL TIME —→ Avoid rush hour if possible; use traffic-avoiding apps; map out your best route; use active transportation alternatives like walking or cycling.

LOWER THE AC SETTING —→ This can cut fuel consumption by 15 to 25 percent.

RESPECT —→ The manufacturer’s maintenance recommendations.

PROPERLY INFLATE TIRES —→ Underinflated-tires increase fuel consumption.

ACCELERATE SLOWLY —→ And ease up on the gas pedal to reduce speed long before arriving at a red light.

DRIVE AT A CONSTANT SPEED —→ On highways, you’ll use 20 percent less fuel by driving at 90 km/h instead of 100 km/h, for example.

On the other hand, be careful not to slow down traffic. And watch out for short-tempered drivers who may tailgate while you’re in EM. In short, don’t risk your life or that of others just to save a little fuel. Respect the rules of the road and use good judgment.



Sylvain Légaré

Automotive Industry Analyst

CAA-Quebec Automotive Advisory Services is free, exclusive to members, and answers the thousand and one questions that come to mind regarding your car, driving and safety.

Any questions?

We assist you in various areas like travel, housing, mobility and insurance.

In this section, we’ll answer all your queries, so take advantage of our expertise! Email us at CAAQUEBECMAGAZINE@CAAQUEBEC.COM.

RECYCLING EV BATTERIES

A promising prospect

It's often said that EV batteries aren't eco-friendly because their production is polluting and, once reaching end-of-life, their minerals become unstable. But is that really the case today? What does their recycling and reuse look like in the future?

BY — **LYNE BOISVERT**

Battery production

EV and plug-in hybrid batteries use lithium-ion cells, consisting of chemical elements like lithium, cobalt, graphite, manganese or nickel. Lithium ions move between two electrodes: the cathode (positive) and the anode (negative). The flow of electrons provides an electric current that can power or charge a device.

Lithium is mainly mined in Australia, China and South America. The ecological impact is huge. According to Planet-Terre, the scientific research website, extracting a tonne of lithium requires almost 1.9 million litres of water and presents a risk of groundwater contamination. The impact is further exacerbated by the fact that coal – a fossil fuel – is used in some countries to ship lithium (by sea) and to produce the electricity required to make batteries.

While the picture is bleak, there is hope. The further technology advances, the less pollution there is in manufacturing batteries, thanks to increased technical efficiency and better material quality. Needless to say, battery recycling will also benefit in the process.



Old batteries

On average, an EV battery lasts about 10 years. Taking into account normal wear and tear, individual driving habits and the number of charge-discharge cycles, this can represent a range between 200,000 and 500,000 kilometres. What's more, EV batteries degrade over time just like smartphone batteries, but at a slower pace, roughly 1 to 3 percent a year. When a battery can no longer provide enough power to start an engine, it must be replaced and disposed of safely to prevent ecological damage – at a garage or battery-recycling centre.

Batteries from wrecked cars can be reused in other vehicles. Weaker batteries can power off-grid household devices or be used to store renewable wind or solar energy.



An electrifying future

The Federal and Quebec governments are determined to become leaders in electric mobility by making the Centre-du-Québec town of Bécancourt a hub for the production of both electric vehicles and EV batteries. The area has easy access to hydro power, minerals and transportation, which is a significant advantage. Companies like Nemaska Lithium, Nouveau Monde Graphite, BASF, General Motors and POSCO Chemical have all made plans to participate actively in this ambitious project over the next few years.

Incidentally, Lithion Recycling will open its own lithium-ion battery dismantling and shredding plant in 2023 in the Montreal region. The company's director of business growth and development, Jean-Christophe Lambert, explains: "Our hydrometallurgical process has a 95-percent recovery rate. The recovered materials will be used to manufacture new rechargeable batteries. Our goal is to recycle 7,500 tonnes of end-of-life batteries per year, or the equivalent of 20,000 EV batteries. We also aim to sell 25 licences for our technology to international partners between now and 2035, and to build another plant in 2025 to process the shredded material into so-called black mass."

The phasing out of gasoline-powered vehicles won't occur overnight. These innovations may well represent a Greener future for EV batteries because they will eventually bring us closer to a regenerative, circular economy.

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Switching from gas to electricity

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Car FAQ

Our Automotive Advisory Services experts reply to the most often asked questions over the years.

BY — JULIE PERREAULT

What should I do if my car gets recalled?

As a consumer, you have the responsibility to stay abreast of recalls involving your vehicle. The relevant automaker or dealership will notify you, assuming they have your contact information on file. If not, you will need to check the vehicle-recall database on the Transport Canada website, then contact your dealership to arrange to fix the recall for free.

When should I switch over to winter tires?

In Quebec, winter tires are mandatory from December 1 through March 15. Since the weather can sometimes play tricks on us, you shouldn't rely exclusively on calendar dates. CAA-Quebec recommends installing winter tires when the temperature remains consistent at 7°C or lower. Thus, it's wise to make an appointment for having them installed before cold weather sets in, even sooner than December 1. That's the best way to be ready for snowfalls and stormy weather, which may occur as early as October or November, depending on where in Quebec you live.



How often should I change the oil and filter?

Most vehicles have a device that indicates proper oil-and-filter change intervals. If your car lacks this feature, you can find the information in the owner's manual. As a general rule, you should schedule an oil change every six months or 10,000 kilometres. Given the Quebec climate and harsh driving conditions, shorter intervals might be in order, depending on vehicle use and driving style (such as prolonged idling, dusty roads or city driving). And since engine oil and the filter work together, it's imperative that both should be changed simultaneously.

When I park the car during icy weather, should I position the windshield wipers upright?

When freezing rain is forecast, some drivers have a habit of lifting the wipers off the windshield of their parked car so they won't get stuck. But that's a bad idea. The vertical position creates undue tension on the wiper-arm springs. Over time, this can reduce the pressure of the blades against the windshield, making them less effective. Moreover, the weight of ice or a gust of wind can cause a wiper to snap back suddenly and crack the windshield.

If the “Check Engine” light comes on, should I keep driving?

Yes and no. A number of problems can cause this dashboard warning signal to light up. Some are trivial, while others can be serious, so it's important to pinpoint the cause. If the light is solid, you can keep going until you can safely pull over. Then unscrew the gas cap and reseal it until you hear it click shut. Often enough, this simple effort will fix the problem. If not, book an appointment with your mechanic, because it could mean the car's emission-control system is faulty, which affects both fuel consumption and carbon emissions. If the light is blinking, stop the car and have it towed to a trusted service centre. A blinking light indicates a serious problem that needs immediate attention (for example, an ignition-coil failure) and may even compromise your safety.



What's the correct tire pressure for my car?

There's no one-size-fits-all answer to this question. Correct tire pressure will vary depending on a vehicle's weight and other characteristics. To discover your precise tire pressure, look for the label affixed to the driver-side door, glove compartment or gas cap, or in the owner's manual. It's important to check the pressure monthly, especially in winter. Each time the temperature drops by 6°C, tire pressure decreases automatically by one pound per square inch (psi). If the temperature is 10°C when winter tires are installed in October, their pressure will have dropped by 5 psi on an icy -20°C morning.

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Should I rustproof my car?

You don't have to, but we highly recommend it. Rust is more than just unsightly; it can shorten the lifespan of your car and reduce its resale value. Rustproofing your car every year won't protect it from damage by road gravel and stones, especially in winter, but it will prevent road salt from lodging in crevices and dents and setting off the corrosion process. In short, rustproofing will delay the formation of rust. All treatment methods have their merits, but it's the quality and regularity of applications that really count.

Are Asian tires reliable?

When shopping for tires, think quality rather than provenance. Most tire manufacturers – whether from America, Europe or Asia – have plants in China and use advanced technology to meet consumer standards. The industry also includes hundreds of Chinese companies, and not all of them possess the technology and expertise required to make a safe product. Less rigorous inspections and materials used may influence the sale price, but they'll also affect tire durability and performance. A tire made of subpar rubber may not provide adequate traction on winter roads, for example. Beware of deals that appear too good to be true. Tires bought at a discount don't necessarily represent savings in the long run because they will probably need to be replaced more often. It's better to invest in a product that offers an excellent quality-price ratio, even if it means spending a little more money. All of the above means saying yes to Asian tires, but not at any price!



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What's the best way to defrost my windshield?

Windshield de-icing sprays are sold at some big-box stores and from car-supply retailers. A tried-and-true method is to spray a water-and-table-salt mixture on your windshield. You can also concoct your own de-icing solution by mixing one part water with two parts 70-percent isopropyl alcohol (rubbing alcohol).

Frost forming on the interior windshield is caused by too much humidity in the car cabin. To prevent this from happening, brush snow and slush off your boots before getting into the car. Once the defrosting is done, direct the airflow toward both the windshield and your feet. And leave a window slightly open to allow floor-mat moisture to escape. Another reliable trick is to place a cloth bag filled with clean cat litter under a front seat to absorb excess condensation.



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2022 CHEVROLET BLAZER

PRICE: \$39,398 to \$56,338

PROS —→ Excellent balance of comfort and handling, exemplary transmission, smooth and powerful V6 engine, precise steering, efficient all-wheel drive, simple controls.

CONS —→ Just adequate rear space, disappointing trunk, mediocre rear visibility, blind-spot monitor is optional, comparatively underequipped.

Chevrolet has announced a 100-percent electric Blazer for 2024, but in the meantime it is business as usual for the gasoline version. Though a minor refresh is on the horizon for 2023, the main recipe will stay the same as this year's. We therefore reconnected straight away with this five-passenger midsize SUV, which competes with the Ford Edge, Honda Passport and Jeep Grand Cherokee, among others. Like most contemporary Blazers, our test model came with a V6 engine, all-wheel drive and a towing capacity of 2,041 kgs (4,500 lbs).

Back on the market for nearly three years, the Blazer continues to stand out for driving enjoyment. Few rivals deliver the same level of handling composure and powertrain refinement. However, several competitors offer more interior space and versatility, two important criteria for crossover buyers. Nevertheless, the Blazer nicely spans the gap between the limited capacities of a compact four-cylinder SUV and a large, seven-passenger midsize.

TESTED MODEL

ENGINE — 3.6-litre V6 (308 hp)
TRANSMISSION — 9-speed automatic with manual mode
DRIVETRAIN — All-wheel drive
TEST TEMPERATURE — -30°C to -7°C
TESTED FUEL ECONOMY — 12.8 L/100 km

2022 CHRYSLER PACIFICA

PRICE: \$52,290 to \$71,920

PROS —→ Unrivalled versatility, successful hybrid powertrain, balanced road behaviour, excellent visibility, rich finish, generous equipment.

CONS —→ Exaggerated pricing and transmission hesitation (gasoline models), some body and trim rattles, overly firm front seats, towing package no longer available (except on Pinnacle), inconsistent reliability.

Chrysler improved the styling, safety, technology and equipment of the Pacifica in 2021 and added all-wheel drive as an option on gasoline models. The goal was to clear the way for the new generation of the Grand Caravan, which is identical to the base versions of the 2017-2020 Pacifica. This year, several formerly optional features are delivered standard. That raises the entry price significantly, especially with the elimination of the most affordable variant of the Pacifica plug-in hybrid.

The Pacifica is still best-in-class in terms of luxury, versatility and refinement. What's more, the plug-in version becomes the most eco-energetic when used, even a little, in electric mode. It is also the model that makes the most sense financially. As pleasant and well-designed as they may be, the gas-only models are more expensive than their more reliable Japanese rivals. And that's not counting the Kia Carnival, whose quality-space-price ratio is currently unbeatable.

TESTED MODEL

ENGINE — 3.6-litre V6 (287 hp)
TRANSMISSION — 9-speed automatic
DRIVETRAIN — All-wheel drive
TEST TEMPERATURE — 7°C to 27°C
TESTED FUEL ECONOMY — 10.8 L/100 km





2022 HYUNDAI IONIQ 5

PRICE: \$46,824 to \$62,824 (\$12,000 government rebates not included)

PROS —→ Immense cabin, very good visibility, adequate controls, balanced road comportment, well-soundproofed cabin.

CONS —→ Very limited availability, door handles need watching, doorsills collect grime, no rear wiper, limited trunk for an SUV.

Hyundai is no newcomer to the field of electric vehicles (EVs), but the IONIQ 5 is its first model built on a platform specifically designed for an EV. Like the Volkswagen ID.4 and the Ford Mustang Mach-E, it uses rear-wheel-drive architecture with optional all-wheel drive. Call it a compact SUV or raised hatchback, the IONIQ 5 combines a futuristic approach with obvious family-friendly leanings.

The IONIQ 5 is brim-full of appeal for both the general public and electric vehicle devotees. Powerful, composed, refined and extremely roomy, it delivers a brilliant combination of driving enjoyment and practicality at a relatively reasonable price. Unfortunately, it also imposes some irritating compromises simply in the name of style and modernity. If you are still interested, be patient: as for several battery-powered models, there was a wait of more than one year at this writing, in April 2022.

TESTED MODEL

ENGINE — Front and rear electric motors with 77.4 kWh lithium-ion battery (320 hp)

TRANSMISSION — 1-speed automatic (direct drive)

DRIVETRAIN — All-wheel drive

CLAIMED RANGE — 414 km

RECHARGING — 61 min from 10% to 80% charge (50-kW fast-charging); 8 hrs 30 min for a complete charge (240volt charging)

TEST TEMPERATURE — -26°C to -2°C

TESTED ENERGY CONSUMPTION — 31.2 kWh/100 km (equivalent to 3.5 L/100 km)



**SCAN TO VIEW THE
ROAD-TEST VIDEO**

2023 MAZDA CX-50

PRICE: \$39,850 to \$47,950

PROS —→ Smooth and powerful turbo engine, exemplary steering, dynamic road comportment, quiet cabin, impeccable finish, long cargo floor.

CONS —→ Firm suspension, restricted visibility, unusual infotainment system, outdated transmission, improved but just adequate rear space, high price.

Mazda is adding another SUV to its lineup for model-year 2023. The new CX-50 slots slightly above the CX-5 in price, size, equipment, off-road capabilities and towing capacity. It shares its basic mechanical components, including the gasoline powertrains, with the CX-5, which is here to stay. But unlike the CX-5, the CX-50 targets avid fans of the outdoors and (mild) off-road adventures, like the Subaru Outback.

Why choose a CX-50 rather than a CX-5? Mainly for its more practical cargo area and superior towing capacity, at least with the turbo engine. Also, the CX50's driving position makes it more enjoyable than its smaller sibling on a day-to-day basis. Refined though the newcomer may be, price is something to think hard about when comparing it to the Subaru Outback or certain roomier and more powerful midsize SUVs.

TESTED MODEL

ENGINE — 2.5-litre turbo 4-cylinder (regular fuel: 227 hp; premium 93-octane fuel: 256 hp)

TRANSMISSION — 6-speed automatic with manual mode

DRIVETRAIN — All-wheel drive

FUEL ECONOMY, CITY/HIGHWAY COMBINED

(NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA) — 9.4 L/100 km





2023 TOYOTA bZ4X

PRICE: \$46,980 to \$64,740 (\$12,000 government rebates and premium paint cost not included)

PROS —→ Comfortable ride, secure handling, roomy cabin and trunk, high ground clearance, pleasant driving position, battery heater is standard.

CONS —→ No rear wiper, steering wheel hides gauges, average driving range, disappointing one-pedal driving, certain controls are complex, noisy ride.

We've been waiting a long time for Toyota's first 100-percent electric vehicle (EV). Called bZ4X, it is presented as a RAV4-sized compact crossover. It launches a dedicated electric-vehicle version of the automaker's global platform, with an optional all-wheel-drive system designed in collaboration with Subaru – which will have its own version, the Solterra. The two models arrive just in time to challenge the Ford Mustang Mach-E, Hyundai IONIQ 5, Kia EV6 and Nissan Ariya in a fast-growing segment.

Spacious, versatile and comfortable, the bZ4X does everything expected of a compact crossover. If Toyota has applied the same rigorous standards as to its numerous hybrid models, it should also deliver standout reliability. However, the automaker's habitual conservatism is evidenced by the bZ4X's decidedly ordinary driving range and power. Taking that long to join the EV fray, Toyota could have raised the bar a bit.

TESTED MODEL

ENGINE – Front and rear electric motors with 72.8 kWh lithium-ion battery (214 hp)

TRANSMISSION – 1-speed automatic (direct drive)

DRIVETRAIN – All-wheel drive

CLAIMED RANGE – 367 km

RECHARGING – undisclosed duration (50-kW fast-charging); 11 hrs for a complete charge (240volt charging)

ENERGY CONSUMPTION – (Toyota): 20.5 kWh/100 km (equivalent to 2.3 L/100 km)

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