The cargo van, a class 3-5 vehicle, is a heavy-duty vocational vehicle and an essential component of the country’s last-mile delivery system. In 2018, the last-mile delivery market in North America was sized at $31.25 billion and is expected to grow to nearly $51 billion in 2022.

There are numerous operational advantages associated with electric vans, such as reduced maintenance and lower fuel costs that can help offset their upfront sticker price. There are also incentives in the form of grants, which can lower the Total Cost of Ownership, making electric vans more cost competitive. And because electric vans eliminate tailpipe emissions, they have become an increasingly attractive choice among fleets and policymakers looking to address local air quality concerns, while also reducing noise and carbon pollution.

Environmental Defense Fund analyzed the life cycle costs of a diesel versus battery electric cargo van and found that the TCO of one electric cargo van is 34% lower over that van’s 12-year lifetime.

This TCO is projected to fall further with growing gain in battery and other technological advancements, financial mechanisms, like Pay as you Save, battery leasing and public grants in the EV sector. The annual savings of reduced operations and maintenance would also help recover the initial vehicle cost within a short time.

Electric cargo vans have lower lifecycle costs than diesel. There are several reasons electric cargo vans boast a lower TCO than their diesel equivalent, including:

- **More fuel efficient**: Diesel cargo vans can drive 10.7 miles per gallon, whereas an electric cargo can drive 27.33 miles per diesel gallon equivalent — making them almost 60% more energy efficient.
- **Less maintenance**: Electric vans have fewer rotating and moving parts, requiring less maintenance, adding to their competitive cost advantage.
- **Higher annual savings**: Cargo vans are a prime candidate for electrification because the more you drive, the more you save. With a driving average of 300 days per year (6 days of operation per week) at 60 miles (city deliveries) to 200 miles (regional deliveries) of daily range, the upfront cost of switching to electric can be earned back in a short time.

### Costs of Diesel vs. Electric Cargo Van

Based on 2018 prices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Diesel</th>
<th>Battery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchase cost</td>
<td>$36k</td>
<td>$66k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations and maintenance</td>
<td>$72k</td>
<td>$51k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel and charging</td>
<td>$94k</td>
<td>$17k</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*The VMT per vehicle for a cargo van is 20000 miles/vehicle-year; Battery electric vehicles are charged with 100% clean electricity.*
Pollution from diesel-fueled box trucks causes serious harm to human health that can lead to higher rates of asthma, heart attacks and premature death.

The impact of this transportation pollution is usually concentrated in urban areas and is often centered around major freight hubs, such as distribution centers and port facilities, which frequently border or are located in disadvantaged communities.

Moreover, poor air quality poses a serious risk to employee health — with coughs, sore throats, asthma attacks and more sick days likely to become more frequent. This costs the global economy $225 billion dollars every year in lost labor income. Cities that have severe air pollution problems will increasingly be seen as a less desirable place to work and live — thereby negatively impacting talent recruitment.

Switching to electric box trucks would not only address the tailpipe emissions that lead to poor air quality in communities, it would also dramatically decrease the life cycle greenhouse gas emissions of box trucks, depending on the electricity generation mix.

EDF analyzed the life cycle emissions of replacing a single diesel box truck with battery electric and found that the life cycle emission reductions are significant. Moreover, if the electric vehicle is charged with electricity generated completely by renewable energy, then the life cycle pollutants and GHGs are almost negligible. This is significant, as these pollutants contribute to poor air quality that can potentially cause serious health effects.