

## My BMW i3 Electric Car Experiment Michael Seay

I bought a three-year old BMW i3 electric vehicle in 2018 to try the new technology when VW bought back my “not so clean diesel” Golf. I was “car-less” for about six weeks, which is an odd-feeling in Dallas where bus and rail does not get you everywhere. I was impressed with a BMW i3 I had a chance to test drive at EarthX and so I searched the web for used i3s and bought one online as a certified pre-owned from a BMW dealer in Huntsville, AL, which they delivered to my driveway. Maybe you remember seeing my car at the Church Earth Day Celebration in 2019. I joined First UU of Dallas the year after.

The i3 was BMW’s first zero emissions mass-produced vehicle launched in 2014 and was designed as a town car or short-range travel. It’s been my primary car and I’ve driven over 22,000 miles in three years. My longest trips were Dallas to McKinney/Dallas to Waxahachie, and back.

The battery is a 22 kWh lithium ion battery pack that gets about 80 miles per charge. I added a 240-volt home charger and can re-charge on my driveway in about 3 hours for about \$ 1.60 in electricity charges, using Green Mountain Renewable Energy. I could charge on 110-volt household current but that would take about ten hours. My office bldg. has an EV charging station so I can also charge at work if needed.

My car has the optional range extender (REX), which is a 647 cc motorcycle engine and a 2-gallon gas tank, that generates electricity when the battery is down to about 5% to extend the range another 60 miles. The REX is a great idea until the roadside charger network is more developed. Later models can fast charge in 30 minutes and have larger batteries and BMW discontinued the REX in 2020. We need to push for more roadside charging stations....Tesla built a great charger network...but it only works for Tesla cars.

The car has two pedals, accelerator and brake, like cars with automatic transmission. But when I back-off the accelerator the car slows down because the wheels are powering a regenerator that recharges the battery (regenerative braking). I remember one trip to DFW Airport on LBJ Freeway where I had more miles in the battery half-way there than when I started!

This is the best car I’ve had in a lot of ways...starting with zero emissions...and it’s fun to drive, has great acceleration and handling, and it’s so quiet! There is no motor noise or vibrations so I can enjoy the sound system, whether its music, podcasts or live streaming the Church Sunday service (audio only)! I really don’t miss going to gas stations once a week.

Wikipedia says the i3 was the world’s third best all-time selling all-electric car in 2016, after the Nissan Leaf and Tesla Model S. Wiki also says by January 2020, i3

sales have been more than 165,000 cars delivered worldwide. Top 3 markets are the United States, Germany and Norway, which is the i3 per capita world leader. That last fact made those GM super bowl ads even more enjoyable! Time for the good old US of A to take on Norway in the electric car race!

I recommend this car and other electric cars highly! I have friends with GM Volts and Tesla Model 3, and they are great cars also! Don't hesitate. Buy or lease one, and help the Planet get back on track. It works!

Email me at [fmseay@me.com](mailto:fmseay@me.com) if you have questions! Happy to help you find the electric car that is right for you!