01/2011

Re: Electric Question

Greg Anson (Letters, 1/27/2011) asks how can electric vehicles save the consumer money when electrical rates go up. Well, aside from that fact that oil prices are rising too, and ignoring the national security issues with oil consumption not to mention the societal costs of environmental catastrophes and disregarding the entire scientific consensus on carbon greenhouse gas emissions, we might start by considering how much energy an electric car actually uses.

Taking the Nissan Leaf which has a 24 kWh Li-ion battery we can note the average national electrical utility rate of 11.5 cents per kWh. This means it will cost about $3 to fully charge the Nissan Leaf battery for approximately a 100 mile range. In Eugene our EWEB rate is around 9.5 cents per kWh so it's even less expensive.

Assuming a car with a 40 mpg rating, this is equivalent to 2.5 gallons of gas which at $3.00 per gal would run one about $7.50. Therefore the ratio $3.00 to $7.50 to go 100 miles is equivalent to about 40% or $1.20 per gallon of gas. Comparing electric passenger cars with similar gas powered vehicles getting the current average gas mileage of around 30 MPG would make electric cars seem even more economical. But if Anson knows where to get gasoline even this cheap, he should let the rest of us know.

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