

Infrastructure Not In Place for Mass Adoption of Electric Vehicles

Cars.com Analyzes "Green" Vehicle Sales Surrounding Earth Day

CHICAGO, April 22, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- As the country celebrates Earth Day, Cars.com reviews fluctuations in hybrid and electric vehicle (EV) sales. The company found hybrid sales are down 15.9 percent year-over-year, while electric vehicle sales are up 21.8 percent year-over-year.

"EVs are in the very early stages of becoming mainstream, and the nearly 22 percent increase from last year, compared to an essentially flat market, indicates growing consumer acceptance," said Jesse Toprak, chief analyst for Cars.com, an automotive digital marketing company. "Price points for many pure EVs are getting closer to where it makes sense financially for consumers. The biggest limitations for growth in the EV segment are battery costs and range, and the lack of proper infrastructure. Many consumers living in metropolitan areas would like to get an EV, but aren't able to for reasons like not being able to charge it in their apartment complex garage or lack of nearby charging stations. Ultimately, mass adoption will require sufficient infrastructure to be in place, and we aren't quite there yet."

Top electric vehicle sales year-to-date include the Nissan LEAF, Tesla Model S, Chevrolet Volt, Toyota Prius PHV, and the Ford Fusion Energi. The Mitsubishi I-Miev saw the most significant decline, but a new version is expected to be released later this year. Declines were also seen in the Tesla Model S and Chevrolet Volt.

"It appears the increased fuel efficiency of regular gas engine vehicles, as well the rising popularity of pure EVs has made a dent in demand for hybrids," said Toprak. "Some early adopters are now opting for EVs because they feel hybrids aren't as eco-friendly as the pure EV alternatives available. Regardless, hybrids are here to stay and are still the most practical option for the majority of environmentally conscious consumers."

Without taking into account ramp-up of new vehicle entrants, the Lincoln MKZ, Hyundai Sonata, Lexus CT200h, and Kia Optima Hybrid are leading the hybrid segment with the biggest increases thus far in 2014. The most significant hybrid model drops include the Chevrolet Malibu Hybrid, Toyota Highlander Hybrid, Ford C-Max Hybrid, Toyota Prius V, Toyota Camry Hybrid, and Toyota Prius Liftback.

The following data shows a summary of electric vehicle and hybrid sales ranked by 2014 YTD sales:

Top 10 EV Sales			
Make/Model	YTD 2014	YTD 2013	YoY
Nissan LEAF	5,184	3,539	46.5%
Tesla Model S*	3,800	4,900	-22.4%
Chevrolet Volt	3,606	4,244	-15.0%
Toyota Prius PHV	3,296	2,353	40.1%
Ford Fusion Energi	2,211	414	434.1%
Ford C-Max Energi	1,633	1,166	40.1%
Ford Focus Electric	406	419	-3.1%
smart ED	405	2	20150.0%
Chevrolet Spark EV	272	-	N/A
Porsche Panamera S-E	254	-	N/A
EV Industry Total	21,881	17,963	21.8%

*Estimated sales

Top 10 Hybrid Sales			
Make/Model	YTD 2014	YTD 2013	YoY Comparison
Toyota Prius Liftback	25,518	34,981	-27.1%
Ford Fusion Hybrid	9,606	10,266	-6.4%
Toyota Prius C	8,833	9,865	-10.5%
Toyota Camry Hybrid	8,782	12,434	-29.4%
Toyota Prius V	6,001	8,525	-29.6%
Hyundai Sonata	5,677	4,256	33.4%
Lexus CT200h	4,000	3,245	23.3%
Ford C-Max Hybrid	3,933	8,511	-53.8%
Kia Optima Hybrid	3,616	3,125	15.7%
Lexus ES Hybrid	3,195	4,039	-20.9%

Total Industry Hybrid Sales	101,906	121,111	-15.9%
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