

# **Auto industry on plug-in hybrids and electric cars**

Several automakers are developing plug-in hybrid vehicles and electric cars that could help meet President Barack Obama's goal of putting 1 million plug-in hybrids on the road by 2015. Many industry officials say the goal is a worthy one but will be difficult to meet. A look at the work by some auto manufacturers:

**GENERAL MOTORS CORP.:** General Motors is set to produce the Chevrolet Volt, an extended range electric plug-in, in late 2010 in limited numbers. The Volt is the centerpiece of GM's attempt to take the lead in electric vehicles and will have a lithium-ion battery and electric motor that can take the car 40 miles on a single charge. A gasoline engine will kick in to power a generator to extend the Volt's range beyond the 40 miles. GM has not yet announced the price of the car, but the cost is expected to be \$30,000 to \$40,000.

**TOYOTA MOTOR CORP.:** Toyota will start global delivery of 500 Toyota Prius plug-in hybrids powered by lithium-ion batteries later this year. Of those, 150 will go to U.S. lease and fleet customers. The plug-in is expected to operate in a similar fashion to the current Prius model by using both gasoline and electricity to propel the vehicle. Toyota is also developing the FT-EV, an all-electric vehicle that is expected to have a range of 50 miles and be on U.S. roads by 2012.

**CHRYSLER LLC:** Chrysler has shown off five different electric-drive vehicles developed by its high-tech ENVI unit and said it plans to start selling one of the five models next year. The electric car prototypes include a Dodge sports car, a Jeep Wrangler and Patriot, a Chrysler minivan, and a concept version of an electric-powered sedan. The automaker is testing the vehicles simultaneously and recently announced that Massachusetts-based A123Systems will supply the lithium-ion batteries for the company's extended range gas-electric cars and its all-electric cars.

**FORD MOTOR CO.:** Ford is planning to produce a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle beginning in 2012 and has been testing a fleet of vehicles through partnerships with several utilities around the nation. Ford has said it intends to bring a battery-electric van to market in 2010 for commercial use, a small battery-electric sedan developed with Magna International by 2011 and a plug-in electric car by 2012. Ford has said Johnson Controls-Saft will supply the battery system for their first production plug-in hybrid electric vehicle.

**NISSAN MOTOR CO.:** Nissan has outlined plans to mass-market electric vehicles by 2012, and to make the cars available on a wide scale in Israel and Denmark in 2011. Nissan's all-electric car will be sold in late 2010 and have 100 miles of pure battery range. Nissan has developed partnerships with states and utilities to promote and develop electric vehicle charging networks.

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TESLA MOTORS INC.: Tesla is selling the Roadster, an electric sports car which starts at \$109,000 and can travel 244 miles on a 3.5-hour charge. The California automaker is developing the all-electric Model S sedan, which is expected to sell for \$60,000 by mid-2011.

FISKER AUTOMOTIVE: The California automaker is releasing its \$87,900 Karma plug-in luxury sports sedan, a four-seater with solar panels, in October. The plug-in can drive gas-free for 50 miles. Fisker is also developing the Karma S, a convertible expected in 2011.

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