

NEWS RELEASE

Media Contact: Patrick Kiker
202.507.4010
pkiker@aceee.org

Electric Car Tops Greenest Vehicle List for First Time in 12 Years

New Mitsubishi i-MIEV Unseats Honda Civic Natural Gas after 8 Consecutive Years at the Top

Washington, D.C (February 7, 2012): With the auto industry back on its feet and fuel economy standards shifting into high gear, automakers provided American consumers with a huge array of vehicles and technologies to choose from in 2012. Today at greencars.org, the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) released its 14th annual comprehensive environmental rankings showing how these offerings stack up.

The “[Greenest](#)” list saw a considerable shake-up this year, with the Mitsubishi i-MIEV battery electric vehicle claiming the top spot from the Honda Civic Natural Gas, which has held on to first place for eight years in a row. Making its model year 2012 debut on the American market, the i-MIEV earns a score of 58, the highest Green Score awarded since the rankings began in 1998. With a combined city and highway fuel economy of 112 miles per gallon equivalent, the i-MIEV outpaces all other vehicles currently sold in United States. “Even taking into account the emissions generated from the electricity used to power the i-MIEV, it still handily outscores other vehicles on the market today,” said ACEEE lead vehicle analyst Shruti Vaidyanathan.

The Honda Civic Natural Gas, despite its improved fuel economy this year, appears in second place, tied with the Nissan Leaf. Rounding out the top six are the Toyota Prius, the Honda Insight, and the Smart ForTwo. This year, hybrids dominate the “[Greenest](#)” list occupying half of all spots. Highly efficient conventional gasoline vehicles also continue to have a presence on the “[Greenest](#)” list, claiming three of the top twelve spots.

“It’s increasingly obvious that automakers are fully invested in providing consumers with the widest possible array of vehicle choices. Earning a spot on the “[Greenest](#)” list is proving to be a real challenge for automakers given the variety of vehicle technologies on the market and the proliferation of highly efficient conventional vehicles. Just using the latest technology does not guarantee a top spot,” said Vaidyanathan. This year saw the arrival of a number of new hybrid options for drivers from Hyundai, Kia, and Infiniti, but none broke into the top twelve.

Widely regarded as the pre-eminent buyer’s guide to environment-friendly passenger cars, trucks, and SUVs, greencars.org provides the facts necessary to examine the eco-performance of any 2012 model.

Vehicles are analyzed on the basis of a “Green Score,” a singular measure that incorporates unhealthy tailpipe emissions, fuel consumption, and emissions of gases that contribute to climate change.

This year, a number of updates were made to the *Green Book*® methodology to more accurately estimate vehicles’ environmental impacts. These include improved emissions estimates for the vehicle manufacturing process, changes reflecting current natural gas extraction practices, and consideration of upcoming shifts in the generation mix for the electricity used to power electric cars.

The greencars.org website also identifies top, widely-available models in each vehicle class. This “[Greener Choices](#)” list includes trucks and SUVs such as the Chevrolet Equinox, GMC Canyon, Honda Odyssey, and the Ford F-150 (FFV). Cars such as the Chevrolet Sonic-5 and Hyundai Sonata top their respective classes. As the list demonstrates, consumers can make “greener choices” whatever their vehicle needs may be. Domestic manufacturers claimed five of the twelve spots.

The “[Meanest](#)” list this year sees a number of heavier light-duty vehicles, pushing out European sports cars as the highest emitters. The dirtiest vehicles for 2012 are the twin Chevrolet G3500 Express and GMC G3500 Savana cargo vans, followed by the Ford E-350 Wagon and the Bugatti Veyron sports car.

In addition to highlighting the year’s “[Greenest](#),” “[Meanest](#),” “[Greener Choices](#),” and best-in-class lists, the greencars.org website features informational write-ups on model year 2012 highlights, a consumer primer on vehicles and the environment, and advice on how to buy green when shopping for a new car or truck.

Summary “Green Scores” of the 1,000+ configurations of all model year 2012 vehicles are made available to subscribers of ACEEE’s *Green Book*® *Online* interactive database along with each configuration’s fuel economy, health-related pollution impacts, and greenhouse gas emissions. Subscribers can also build custom lists for comparing vehicles. Monthly and annual subscriptions to ACEEE’s *Green Book*® *Online* are available at greencars.org.

About ACEEE: The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy acts as a catalyst to advance energy efficiency policies, programs, technologies, investments, and behaviors. For information about ACEEE and its programs, publications, and conferences, visit aceee.org.

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