

Toyota First Automotive Manufacturer to Participate in SmartGridCity Project

October 20, 2009

Denver, October 20, 2009 – – Toyota Motor Sales (TMS), U.S.A., Inc. announced today that it will place ten Prius plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHV) with Xcel Energy's SmartGridCity™ project in Boulder, Colorado. The vehicles will be the focus of an interdisciplinary research project coordinated by the University of Colorado at Boulder Renewable and Sustainable Energy Institute (RASEI), a new joint venture between the U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and the University of Colorado at Boulder.

“As a founding member of RASEI's Leadership Council, we see this as a natural fit for Toyota,” said Chris Hostetter, TMS group vice president, advanced product strategy and product planning. “Future customers will have high expectations for these emerging technologies. Demonstration programs like this will ensure that the vehicles we bring to market will not just meet customer expectations, but exceed them.”

RASEI faculty director Carl Koval added, “This is a perfect illustration of how collaborative research from universities and federal laboratories combined with industry leadership can address the energy and technology challenges of the future.”

The SmartGridCity project is the first fully functioning smart grid enabled city in the world. Its goal is to provide increased grid reliability and energy use information. It will also allow participating customers to remotely control in-home energy management devices.

RASEI, Xcel Energy and TMS will use this program to gather data on vehicle performance and charging patterns, consumer behavior and preferences, as well as electric utility/customer interactions. The locale offers the additional benefit of monitoring high altitude, cold climate performance of Toyota's first generation lithium-ion battery.

“We know that PHVs coupled with smart charging techniques can reduce carbon emissions,” said Jay Herrmann, regional vice president for Xcel Energy. “Partnerships like this can bring us closer to delivering new solutions that can conserve energy, save natural resources and reduce dependence on foreign oil.”

The ten vehicles participating in the project are part of a 150 vehicle demonstration fleet arriving in the U.S. in early 2010. The Prius PHV is targeted to achieve a maximum electric only range of approximately 12 miles and will be capable of achieving highway speeds in electric only mode. For longer distances, the PHV concept reverts to “hybrid mode” and operates like a regular Prius.

The vehicles are targeted for delivery to the SmartCityGrid project in March 2010.

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