



County Conservation News

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Issue 3

In This Issue

- The Transportation Sector
- Alternative Vehicle Options

Fun Links

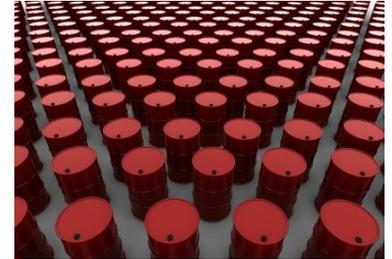
- [Calorie Burner Calculator](#) from HealthStatus – compare walking or biking to driving!
- [The Helena Area Transit Development Plan](#)
- Montana Department of Transportation [Bicycling Information page](#) with links

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The Transportation Sector

Did you know that the United States consumes **18,771,000 barrels of oil per day!** This makes the United States the top oil consuming country in the world. Of those 18,771,000 barrels, 9,667,000 (52%) are imported from other countries. The transportation sector uses 72%.

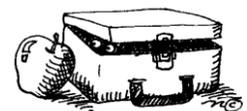


There is good news though, you can lower these numbers and help the United States work towards energy independence.

- A sample of 259 county employees showed that approximately 21% live less than 1 mile from their work and 20% live 1-2 miles from their work. Join the [BikeWalk initiative](#) being started by the City of Helena and bike or walk to work. This will be good for your car, your wallet, your health, and the environment.



- If you live too far to bike or walk to work, you could start a car pool. Not only will this save you money on gas, but it is a great way to network. Also, the city county building has two parking spots dedicated for car poolers.
- Instead of driving somewhere for lunch, walk somewhere nearby or pack your lunch. You would be shocked how much money you can save by packing your lunch every day.
- Making a quick pit stop? Turn your car off instead of letting it run. This will save you money on gas and reduce pollution.
- Use the Helena bus transportation system. You can find information about fares, routes and schedules on the City of Helena website or by [clicking here](#).
- Thinking about getting a new car? Consider the money you could save by getting a fuel efficient vehicle. There are an increasing amount of options available to you.



Alternative Vehicle Options

Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEVs) have both gasoline and electric components. When a hybrid is being driven at low speeds it is run by an electric motor. At higher speeds, when extra power is needed, the hybrid uses a gasoline-powered engine. The gas engine generates electricity and recharges the electric motor when it is in use. This combination allows for significantly increased efficiency and fuel economy. The model that pioneered the popularity of these vehicles

was the Toyota Prius, first released in Japan in December of 1997. It was released in the United States in August of 2000. It achieved 52 miles per gallon (mpg) city, and 45 highway.¹ While the Prius is the most well-known hybrid vehicle, many traditional vehicles are starting to offer a hybrid alternative in existing models.

- Toyota offers the following hybrid vehicles: Toyota Camry, Prius, Highlander.
- Honda offers the following hybrid vehicles: CR-Z Sport, Insight, Civic.
- Other hybrid vehicles include, but are not limited to the GMC Sierra, Nissan Altima, Lexus RX 400h and GS 450h, Ford Escape, and Saturn Aura.²



The 2007 Toyota Prius

The first purely **Electric Vehicle** (EV) is usually credited to Robert Anderson of Scotland between 1832 and 1839.³ The exact year is unknown. The concept of the EV died out in large part due to Henry Ford's introduction of the assembly line and consequently mass-production, in addition to the cheapness of oil in 1908. With oil prices on the rise and the concern over energy independence and the environment, EVs have become an increasingly popular option. Up until now there were two options for EVs. Conversion kits and manuals are available for purchase on the internet but can be expensive and complicated. Tesla makes a purely electric model, the Roadster. It is fast, efficient, sleek, and starts at \$101,500.⁴ For those of us who cannot afford to spend \$100,000 on a vehicle, Nissan will be introducing the LEAF in December, 2010.

- The Nissan LEAF starts at \$25,280. It is 100% electric and is thus considered a zero-emissions vehicle. Of course, however, this depends on the source of electricity used to charge the vehicle. It has a range of up to 100 miles per charge, however this varies based on the driving conditions.⁵



The 2011 Nissan LEAF

The **Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicle** (PHEV) is a combination of the Hybrid Vehicle and Electric Vehicle. It uses a hybrid engine, but also has a plug-in feature to recharge. It typically uses the electricity first, until it has run out and then switches over to the gasoline powered engine.

- The Chevrolet Volt starts at \$32,780. The Chevy website says that it will be available in late 2010, however that is starting to look unlikely. The Volt averages 40 miles per charge then switches over to a gasoline powered generator.⁶
- Audi, BMW, Ford, Mercedes, and Mitsubishi are all planning to release PHEVs over the next few years.⁷



The 2011 Chevy Volt

¹ Toyota. http://www.toyota.com/about/our_business/our_history/product_history/pdf/prius.pdf

² Green Hybrid. <http://www.greenhybrid.com/compare/mileage/>

³ PBS. <http://www.pbs.org/shows/223/electric-car-timeline.html>

⁴ Tesla Motors. <https://www.teslamotors.com/own>

⁵ Nissan. <http://www.nissanusa.com/leaf-electric-car/index#/leaf-electric-car/index>

⁶ Chevrolet. <http://www.chevrolet.com/volt/>

⁷ Plug-in America. <http://www.pluginamerica.org/vehicles>