

EPA Test Procedures for Electric Vehicles and Plug-in Hybrids

DRAFT Summary – Regulations take Precedence Jan 13, 2011

Test procedures and regulations may be revised in the ongoing 2012 Fuel Economy Labeling Rulemaking, (see proposed rule at 75 FR 58078, Sept 23, 2010)

1. Electric Vehicle Test Procedure - In general, EPA testing follows SAE Recommended Practice J1634 "Electric Vehicle Energy Consumption and Range Test Procedure," which (as the title implies) is basically a dynamometer test procedure used to measure the energy consumption and driving range of an electric vehicle.

Electric Vehicle - City Test Procedure Summary - Following SAE J1634 Recommended Practice, the battery is fully charged, the vehicle is parked over night, and then the following day the vehicle driven over successive city cycles until the battery becomes discharged (and the vehicle can no longer follow the city driving cycle). After running the successive city cycles, the battery is recharged from a normal AC source and the energy consumption of the vehicle is determined (in kW-hr/mile or kW-hr/100 miles) by dividing the kilowatt-hours of energy to recharge the battery by the miles traveled by the vehicle. To calculate the energy consumption in units of mpg_e (miles/gallon equivalent) we use a conversion factor of 33.7 kilowatt-hours of electricity per gallon of gasoline (which is basically a measure of the energy in gasoline (in BTUs) converted to electricity). The city driving range is determined from the number of miles driven over the city cycle until the vehicle can no longer keep up with the driving cycle.

Electric Vehicle – Highway Test Procedure Summary - The same test SAE J1634 procedure outlined above, is used determine the highway energy consumption and the highway driving range (except the vehicle is operated over successive highway cycles) .

Electric Vehicle - Adjustment Procedure used to Derive City & Highway FE Label (Window Sticker) Estimates - EPA regulations require the city and highway energy consumption and driving range values listed on the FE Label (window sticker) to be adjusted to more accurately reflect the energy consumption and driving range that customers can expect to achieve in the real world. For EVs, EPA currently uses the derived 5-cycle adjustment method described in 40 CFR 600.210-08(a)(2)(i) and (a)(2)(ii), capped at a maximum adjustment of 30% (i.e. multiply unadjusted values by 0.7).

2. Plug-in Hybrid Vehicle (PHEV) Test Procedure - EPA testing follows SAE Recommended Practice J1711 "Recommended Practice for Measuring the Exhaust Emissions and Fuel Economy of Hybrid-Electric Vehicles, Including Plug-in Hybrid Vehicles," with some exceptions.

PHEV - Charge-Depleting Operation - For the electric portion of PHEV operation (commonly called charge-depleting mode of operation), EPA testing follows SAE Recommended Practice J1711, which is essentially the same test procedure as used for electric vehicles. The charge depleting test for PHEVs starts with a fully charged battery and ends when the battery is discharged. If the gasoline engine operates during the charge depleting mode, both the electric energy consumption and the gasoline consumption are used to calculate the mpg_e values for the charge depleting (mostly electric) operation.

PHEV - Charge-Sustaining Operation - For the gasoline portion of PHEV operation (commonly called charge-sustaining mode of operation), EPA tests the vehicle similar to any other conventional hybrid vehicle---using either the derived 5-cycle (city/highway) method or the vehicle specific 5-cycle (city/highway/US06/SC03/Cold temperature test) method. The charge-sustaining test for PHEVs starts with a discharged battery. Note that for the city test, EPA conducts a 4-bag city test similar to the test procedure required for any conventional hybrid vehicle.

PHEV - Adjustment Procedure used to Derive City & Highway FE Label (Window Sticker)

Estimates - EPA regulations require the city and highway energy consumption and driving range values listed on the FE Label (window sticker) to be adjusted to more accurately reflect the energy consumption and driving range that customers can expect to achieve in the real world. For PHEVs operating in the charge-depleting mode, the same adjustment procedure is used as described above for electric vehicles. For PHEVs operating in the charge-sustaining mode, the adjustment procedure is similar to any other conventional vehicle---the dynamometer test values are adjusted using either the derived 5-cycle (city/highway) method described in 40 CFR 600.210-08(a)(2)(i)and(a(2(ii), or the vehicle specific 5-cycle (city/highway/US06/SC03/Cold temperature test) method described in 40 CFR 600.114-08.

3. EPA Confirmatory testing - Currently, EPA performs confirmatory testing on all light-duty electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid vehicles at EPA's emission testing laboratory in Ann Arbor Michigan.