

FAQs

The Nissan Leaf joins the City of Seattle fleet

How much does an electric vehicle cost to buy and maintain?

The sticker price of a Nissan Leaf is \$32,500. The City of Seattle is paying \$30,500. For the Leafs in the City fleet, the maintenance costs over the life of a Leaf are \$2,500.

Maintenance for a Leaf includes:

- Rotation of tires
- Various checks such as:
 - Suspension, brakes, steering gear and linkage, cabin air filter, charging port, etc
- The only fluid that is changed is the brake and coolant fluid – there is no regular “oil” to change as there is no engine!
- The battery is checked, but is it not replaced

The City replaces its sedan fleet (example: Toyota Prius) vehicles every 10 years.

How can the City spend so much money to buy 35 Leafs?

As part of its fleet management, the City’s Fleet Services regularly replaces vehicles at the end of their life cycle. Since creating its Green Fleet action plan in 2003, the City’s long-term goal was to have a fleet that is 100 percent clean and green – using clean fuels, having fuel efficient vehicles, low emission vehicles. With the addition of the 35 Leafs, the City will replace regular gas vehicles scheduled to be replaced, and the fleet is 40 percent clean and green. In the last three years, the City has reduced the size of its rolling stock fleet by about 400 vehicles down to approximately 4,225.

How can City Light have an aggressive energy conservation program and yet encourage electric vehicles?

City Light encourages smart energy use, and while that includes conservation, we realize that our clean power sources make electric vehicles an attractive alternative to the traditional internal combustion engine, particularly for those customers who are interested in decreasing their carbon footprint, or lessening our nation’s dependence on foreign oil.

If people start using electric vehicles on a large scale, will City Light have to raise its rates to meet the increased demand?

City Light’s rates are determined by a variety of factors. While electric vehicles may increase demand upon our system, they are not expected to be a driving force in any rate increase. Instead, City Light may consider options such as offering a time-of-day rate that would encourage vehicle charging when there is surplus electrical capacity in our system.

How long does it take to charge one of these electric vehicles?

There are different levels of EV charging:

- Level 1: this is a standard 120 volt outlet. An EV with a 24 kWh battery will recharge from empty in about 16 hours using a dedicated 120 volt-circuit.
- Level 2: 240 volt outlet. This is similar in wattage to a dryer or hot water heater. This level will charge an EV in less than eight hours
- DC/Fast charging: this is a 480 volt commercial installation and it will charge an EV in less than one hour.

Can people charge these cars on just regular household electric service?

Yes, but it is recommended to have a dedicated circuit.

With public charging stations, do you have to leave your car to charge for hours at a time?

It depends how depleted the battery is. If you are using a Level 2 charger you will pick up 12.5 miles of range per hour of charging.