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The new Honda Accord Hybrid is the latest addition to the Metro non-revenue fleet.



Photos: Arlene Lim

## Honda Accord Hybrids to be Tested in Metro's Non-Revenue Fleet

- Gasoline-electric engines get 29 mpg in the city, 37 mpg on the highway

By MIKE STANGE

(July 13, 2005) Move over Metro Liner, make room for a new, high-tech vehicle that will soon join Metro. It's the Honda Accord Hybrid and it's getting a tryout in the non-revenue fleet.

The Non-Revenue Department has acquired six Honda Accord Hybrid sedans. Under the direction of Deputy Executive Officer Milo Victoria, over the next 12 months the vehicles will be closely monitored for fuel economy, ease of maintenance and overall reliability.



Showcasing the new hybrids are from left Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Harold Torres, Equipment Maintenance Supervisor Mike Stange and DEO Milo Victoria.

The Honda Accord Hybrid, with its 225-horse power V-6 engine,

achieves fuel economy of 29 miles per gallon in the city and 37 mpg on the highway.

Under the hood of the Honda Accord Hybrid is a V6 engine capable of power and good fuel economy – 29 mpg city, 37 mpg highway.



The car attains that performance with the assistance of a 12-kilowatt, high-output electric motor, which contributes more than 100 foot-pounds of additional torque to the engine under hard acceleration.

If the vehicles perform satisfactorily in service and provide the expected fuel and maintenance savings, says Victoria, more units might be purchased as standard non-revenue replacement vehicles.



### State-of-the-art technology

The Honda Hybrid's propulsion system uses a technology called the Integrated Motor Assist (IMA). A small electric motor delivers high torque to the internal combustion engine during acceleration or under heavy loads.



Three of the six cylinders are deactivated when high power demand is not required.

Once the Hybrid comes to a stop, an auto-stop feature shuts down the gasoline engine. This feature allows the Hybrid to reduce fuel consumption. Upon acceleration, the gasoline and electric engine power back up.

The IMA system's electronic motor also acts as a generator by recapturing deceleration and braking energy to recharge the car's batteries. Two spark plugs per cylinder improve ignition, thus reducing emissions.

### Fuel-saving features

Other fuel-saving features include an electric power steering system and a more efficient air conditioning compressor.

To further improve the overall efficiency of the vehicle, the Hybrid is constructed of weight-saving features, including an aluminum hood, bumper beams and magnesium engine components.

Metro's introduction of the new hybrid cars coincides with Long Beach Transit's use of hybrid gasoline-electric buses. Although other agencies have used hybrid buses in tests, Long Beach Transit is the first to begin using them in regular service.

The new bus has a fuel economy of 5.5 miles per gallon – 50 percent

better than similar diesel buses. More hybrid coaches are expected to be added to the Long Beach Transit fleet later this summer. -- *Arlene Lim contributed to this story.*

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