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EPA Says Toyota Prius Hybrid No Longer 'Most Fuel-Efficient'



By **John Voelcker**
Senior Editor
July 27th, 2011

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2011 Toyota Prius

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Ask Americans about fuel-efficient cars, and many will name the iconic [Toyota Prius](#) hybrid, with gas mileage rated by the EPA at a combined 50 miles per gallon.

So you'd expect the EPA to rank the Prius as the best midsize car on its list of [Most and Least Fuel Efficient Cars](#), right?

It's not there.

Instead, it's been displaced by the battery-electric [2011 Nissan Leaf](#), which doesn't use fuel at all. The EPA rates the Leaf electric car at a combined 99 MPGe, or equivalent miles per gallon.

A footnote on the EPA site explains, "MPGe is miles per gallon of gasoline-equivalent and represents the miles per amount of energy of a non-gasoline fuel that is equivalent to the amount of energy in a gallon of gasoline. For an EV or PHEV, 33.7 kilowatt-hours of electricity represents the same amount of energy as one gallon of gasoline."



But does this make sense? The majority of U.S. car buyers today likely aren't quite ready to buy a plug-in car, if indeed they could get one (orders for both the Leaf and the 2011 Chevy Volt are backlogged due to limited production). But based on the EPA's best and worst



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