



Deep Roots
Greater Heights

District of Maple Ridge News Release

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District unveils newest 'zero emission vehicles' at Earth Day Celebration

Maple Ridge , BC: On Saturday, April 20 the District will unveil one of the three new Nissan Leaf zero emission electric vehicles which have been added to the fleet. In 2011, the District unveiled its first fully electric vehicle. A Chevy Sonoma pickup truck that had reached the end of its service life was about to be recycled, and the District mechanics converted that truck to a fully electric vehicle using off the shelf technology. That vehicle has provided the District with baseline data on reliability, maintenance and energy costs which was used to develop the business case for the purchase of the three new Nissan Leaf vehicles.

In 2012, the District applied for a Community Charging Infrastructure fund from the province to construct eight Level 2 electric vehicle charging stations in Maple Ridge. Those stations are now built and operating, with seven charging stalls located in the Town Centre, including two that will be the focus of the District electric vehicle display from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Memorial Peace Park Earth Day celebration.

“Two of the new charging locations are located on Dewdney Trunk Road outside Municipal Hall, by our iconic “Beast” clock. What I find heartening is the huge public interest in this technology. For the first few weeks, people walking down the street stopped to look at the charging station and often snap pictures with their phones,” noted Mayor Ernie Daykin. He continued, “The District already has 28 hybrid vehicles in our fleet, and just purchased three new ones for a total of 31 hybrids. Council recently heard how the life of those vehicles has been extended beyond the typical six year replacement cycle due to the efficiencies of maintenance and continued lower operating costs. These new vehicles were reviewed as part of a business case that focused on the economics of the purchase including operating and maintenance costs. The lessons that we learned from the electric truck show that this project is a solid financial investment with benefits to the environment. That’s why we are choosing to do the unveiling at the Earth Day celebration.”

Walter Oleschak, District Superintendent of Roads and Fleet, will be on hand with colleagues from the Sustainability & Corporate Planning team to provide folks with a look at the existing electric truck, the District’s new electric ‘Gator’ style maintenance vehicle as well as the three new Nissan Leaf vehicles.

“We are very pleased to be offering a short ride, at the annual Earth Day Celebration, from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm, in the new Nissan Leaf for people who are interested in this technology. In addition, members of our team will show folks how the charging stations

work and talk about the costs of operating these vehicles versus traditional vehicles,” said Mr. Oleschak. “With the provincial rebates available for electric vehicles and the substantial savings in fuel and maintenance, these vehicles are a solid investment for our community from a financial and environmental perspective. The expertise that we gained from the construction and operation of our electric truck was critical in the analysis of this purchase. The accessibility of the charging stations makes this a fantastic fit and puts us in the forefront of this technology,” he added.

There are seven vehicle charging locations in the Town Centre, three located underground below the Business Centre on the west side of the elevator area, two at the northwest corner of Memorial Peace Park and two on Dewdney Trunk Road in front of Municipal Hall. Users of the charging stations in the underground parking lot will still be required to pay for their parking; however there will be no charge for the power at the stations for one year.

“Council will look at the operation of the charging stations in one year and decide on the model that we want to follow for recovering the cost of power,” said Mayor Daykin. “It costs about \$1.40 to \$1.60 to charge a vehicle fully, and for the first year we are treating this as a complementary service to encourage folks to visit our community and to provide an incentive for local residents to reduce their carbon footprint. Thus far the feedback has been tremendous and I think that we are going to see a bit of a ‘tipping point’ on this technology over the next few years,” he concluded.

Please join us at the annual Earth Day celebration from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at the electric vehicle charging stations located on the northwest corner of Memorial Peace Park on Saturday, April 20. We are very proud to be part of this great community celebration and are pleased to be able to offer information and a demonstration of this great new technology and other initiatives that the District has taken to improve our efficiency, reduce our use of non-renewable resources and reduce our carbon footprint. For information please contact Walter Oleschak at 604-463-9581 regarding the electric vehicles or Alexandra Tudose, Sustainability & Corporate Planning at 604-463-5221 regarding the Earth Day display.