

100 MPG Electric Hummer a Reality

by Jason Lomborg, Technical Editor



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[Raser Technologies](#) [1] recently [announced](#) [2] a 100 MPG version of the Hummer H3 at the 2009 [SAE International World Congress](#) [3]. The idea of taking the most infamous gas guzzler and making it “greener than a Prius” sounds like a pipe dream. But Raser claims to have achieved it. The resultant vehicle is the best of both worlds: environmentally-friendly and attractive.



For the E-Hummer’s guts, Raser tapped its plug-in hybrid E-REV (Extended-Range Electric Vehicle). Raser describes it as “similar in function to the Chevy Volt but designed for use in a variety of larger full-sized SUVs and light trucks.” The E-REV Hummer gets 40 miles on batteries alone, before turning on its internal combustion engine. In total, the vehicle’s range is about 400 miles. This is a good deal, though I have to

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call shenanigans on Raser's press release. They claim "Most vehicles drive fewer than 40 miles a day; most drivers would rarely use gas and average more than 100 mpg in gas fuel economy over time." If you just need a puddle jumper, the Hummer is overkill. There's any number of smaller, cheaper electric vehicles that could perform the same function. Some would say this has always dogged the Hummer.

The electric component is driven by Raser's 200kW AC induction motor connected to a 4WD transmission. The EcoTech engine uses a 100KW electric generator to recharge the batteries while driving. As always, cost is of paramount concern. Topping 30K, the Hummer is a tad pricey already. Ironically, though, being a gross symbol of excess could save it. The Hummer is big enough to integrate the electric motor and lithium-ion batteries without designing an all-new vehicle. This could reduce costs. Says Jim Spellman, company vice president, "Unlike the Volt and other hybrid cars we didn't have to build an entire car around the battery packs...there was plenty of room in the back of the Hummer to install them, and they don't affect the ground clearance of the vehicle."

Ultimately, you're still making an initial investment: pay more now, and break even on gas costs later. Whether consumers will do that is debatable. This strikes to the heart of nearly every hybrid, plug-in electric, or pure-electric vehicle. Most likely, the E-REV H3 will find the same audience as the Volt: affluent hipsters who wish to flaunt their dedication to the environment.

Do you agree? Disagree? Think I've lost my marbles? Send all comments to jason.lomberg@advantagemedia.com [4] or leave your comment below for the chance to win a free Efficiency Zone t-shirt!

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[2] <http://www.rasertech.com/news/press-releases/raser-technologies-unveils-100-mpg-plug-in-hybrid-hummer>

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