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The Associated Press



DETROIT (AP) — General Motors said Wednesday that the battery-powered version of its Chevrolet Spark mini-car can travel up to 82 miles (132 kilometers) on a single charge, putting it among the leaders in mass-market electric vehicles sold in the U.S.

The Spark EV also gets the equivalent of 119 miles per gallon (50 kilometers per liter) in testing monitored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. GM said that makes it the most efficient car available for sale to the public. The figure is for combined city and highway driving.

The tiny electric Chevrolet goes on sale in July in Oregon and California. GM hasn't released the price but has said it will be less than \$32,500, excluding a \$7,500 federal tax credit. The company also hasn't said when it will go on sale in other states.

The Spark enters the market at a time when gasoline prices nationwide are relatively low. The average price of a gallon (3.8 liters) of regular gas on Wednesday was \$3.52, 33 cents less than the same time last year, according to AAA. Lower gas prices and a limited range have held down U.S. electric car sales.

Other electric cars can travel farther on a single charge. The Fiat 500e, for example, can go 87 miles (140 kilometers) on a charge according to EPA estimates, while versions of the Tesla Model S can travel up to 265 miles (426 kilometers) per charge.

Spark still is more economical because its battery weighs less. A lighter-weight vehicle burns less gas.

The Scion IQ EV has a higher gas mileage equivalency figure than the Spark EV at

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121 mpg (51.4 kms per liter) but GM says it is sold only to fleet buyers such as governments.

The motor and other driveline parts for the Spark EV are made in Baltimore, but the car is assembled in South Korea along with the gasoline version.

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