

Honda Delivers FCX Fuel Cell Vehicle to World's First Individual Customer

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Marking an historic achievement in the evolution of the automobile and the advancement of future transportation technology, American Honda Motor Co., Inc., today announced the lease of its revolutionary FCX, an advanced hydrogen-powered fuel cell vehicle, to the world's first individual customers, Jon and Sandy Spallino of Redondo Beach, California. The Spallinos become the world's first fuel cell family, having signed an agreement to lease a 2005 Honda FCX for a period of two years.

Honda is the only automotive manufacturer to certify its fuel cell vehicle for regular daily use and the first to offer its technology to an individual customer. The Spallinos will use the FCX in everyday normal use,

including commuting to work to Orange County, trips to school for their children, shopping and household errands.

“American Honda Motor Co. is thrilled to introduce the world’s first full cell family,” said John Mendel, senior vice president, automotive operations, for American Honda. “We’re pleased to be taking this historic step forward in the further advancement of our fuel cell program. Our advanced fuel cell technology has been proven and tested through a successful fleet sales partnership over the last three years. With this announcement, Honda furthers its commitment to the continued advancement of this technology for the benefit of society, with the ultimate goal of achieving large-scale commercialization of fuel cell vehicles.”

California Hydrogen Highway

The Spallino family, living in the Los Angeles area, will be among the first individuals to begin utilizing the first of California’s Hydrogen Highway refueling stations, a statewide infrastructure build out underway to offer hydrogen refueling station access to private individuals. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger announced the state’s commitment to a Hydrogen Highway in April of this year, creating a public and private partnership to build California’s Hydrogen Highway by 2010.

“We applaud the Governor and his administration for their environmental vision and their commitment to keeping California on the cutting edge of new technology development,” said Mendel. “Without this initiative, we could not be taking the steps we are today.”

Honda FCX on the Road

As the next natural step in deployment of Honda fuel cell technology, the lease of the FCX to the Spallino family will be the first of several FCX vehicles to be leased to individual customers over the next year. Honda's leadership in hydrogen vehicle technology also extends to a fleet of 13 FCX fuel cell vehicles in regular daily use with six public municipal customers in California, New York and Nevada.

"With its outstanding environmental benefits, advanced technology, and safety-tested performance, the FCX is proving every day its viability as the transportation technology of the future," said Mendel. "The Spallino's experience with the FCX will provide Honda engineers with real-world driving experience and feedback by an individual family, which will be invaluable as we design future models."

"I'm looking forward to commuting to work and running the kids around in the FCX," said Jon Spallino, the first retail customer to lease the FCX. "We're really excited about the opportunity to lease this car. The FCX drives just like any other vehicle on the road -- without the emissions."

The Honda FCX is the first and only hydrogen vehicle to ever be certified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and California's Air Resources Board (CARB). The EPA certified the 2005 FCX as a Tier-2 Bin 1, and CARB certified the FCX as a Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV).

The 2005 FCX model is powered by Honda's originally developed fuel cell stack (Honda FC Stack) with the breakthrough capability to start and operate at sub-freezing temperatures as low as -4 degrees Fahrenheit, along with increased performance, range and fuel efficiency compared with earlier models. The FCX was the first fuel cell vehicle to be listed in the EPA's fuel economy guide in 2003. The 2005 FCX carries an EPA city/highway rating of 62/51 miles per gallon and a range of 190 miles.

Commitment to Environmentally Friendly Vehicles

Honda's extensive history of environmental leadership includes recognition as the "Greenest Automaker" by the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) in its 2001, 2003 and 2004 rankings of corporate environmental performance with the lowest average emission levels and highest average fuel economy of any automobile manufacturer.

Honda also leads the automotive industry with the most gas-electric hybrid models: the Insight, America's first hybrid vehicle; the Civic Hybrid, the first truly mainstream hybrid model; and the Accord Hybrid, the world's first V6-powered hybrid vehicle.

In April 2005, Honda announced it had begun limited retail sales of its natural gas-powered Civic GX Sedan paired with a revolutionary new home-refueling appliance called Phill. The Civic GX is the cleanest internal combustion vehicle ever certified by the U.S. EPA and, with the introduction of home refueling, has the lowest fuel cost per mile of any new vehicle. The Phill appliance, manufactured and marketed by FuelMaker Corporation, is an affordable home refueling appliance that allows drivers the convenience of refueling their vehicles at home using their existing natural gas supply. Phill is available for lease through 17 authorized Honda Civic GX California dealers.

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