

Hybrids easy on the fuel, government says

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Hybrid automobiles by Toyota, Honda and Ford are the most fuel efficient, said the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

This year's Toyota Prius, Honda Civic, Toyota Camry Hybrid and Ford Escape Hybrid four-wheel drive models headed the government agencies' 2007 Fuel Economy Guide release Thursday. Also included were the Toyota Yaris, Honda Fit, Toyota Corolla, Hyundai Accent, Kia Rio, Ford Escape hybrid four-wheel drive and Mercury Mariner hybrid four-wheel drive.

"By fueling consumers with better information, EPA is helping American motorists conserve their money while preserving our environment," EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson said in the release.

Using the fuel economy information allows consumers to make "a more educated decision that will help conserve energy and save money," Energy Secretary Samuel W. Bodman said.

Testing by the EPA and manufacturers determine fuel economy estimates, which are displayed on new vehicles' window stickers, the EPA said.

EPA officials said they proposed changing testing methods to more accurately reflect what drivers experience on the road. The changes are expected to be finalized in time for its 2008 model rating, the EPA said.

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