

Experts mixed on whether Obama's goal of 1 million electric cars by 2015 can be reached

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(PhysOrg.com) -- A recent report by the Department of Energy (DOE) stating that the United States is well on its way to meeting President Obama's goal of having at least one million plug-in electric cars and trucks on our nation's highways and byways by 2015 is in direct conflict with a another recent report from Pike Research suggesting that while worldwide sales of electric vehicles will likely pass the million mark, sales in the United States likely won't grow fast enough to reach much higher than 850,000 units by that date.

In its report, the DOE, (backed up by a statement from Assistant [Energy Secretary](#) David Sandalow) predicts that sales of plug-in electric (which excludes hybrids) vehicles will be sufficient between now and 2015 to take us over the million mark, to somewhere in the neighborhood of 1.2

million vehicles; more than enough to fulfill the president's goal.

The president's goal has been widely criticized as far too optimistic, especially in light of the recent recession, and production problems with the Nissan Leaf (partially due to the earthquake/tsunami in Japan) one of the all electric vehicles expected to be among the leading sellers in the near future. Adding to the fire is J.D. Powers, which came out with predictions of just 750,000 electric vehicles by 2015.

Other critics have pointed out that the issue is rather moot though, since a million electric vehicles running by 2015, would still account for less than one half of one percent of all operating vehicles by that date. Others however, point out that by passing certain milestones, [electric vehicles](#) become ever more of a viable choice for American consumers, thus, paving the way for a boon in sales in later years.

What's not included in either report, unfortunately, due to the time frame in which they were created, is the current cost of gasoline and the possibility that it could reach \$5 gallon in this country before the summer is out. While still not nearly as much as consumers are paying in Europe, it could provide a catalyst for change, and swifter acceptance of all-electric vehicles, as consumers find they have few other alternatives.

After all is said and done, it appears that despite the massive amounts of money being spent to create their projections, by both government and those in the private sector, there are just too many variables involved to accurately predict where car sales are headed; so, in the end, we'll all likely just have to wait and see how things develop.

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