

PPL Electric Utilities Plugs in to Industry Test of New Electric Vehicles

National Research Project Featuring Chevy Volts Evaluates How Electric Vehicles Could Affect the Grid

PPL Electric Utilities

PPL Electric Utilities is charging up its vehicle fleet with three Chevrolet Volts as part of a national research project to evaluate the new plug-in electric vehicles before their wider market availability.

PPL Electric Utilities is one of 28 member utilities of the Electric Power Research Institute participating with General Motors. Supported by federal matching grants, EPRI purchased a total of 64 electric vehicles that could be used in 40 states and three Canadian provinces.

PPL Electric Utilities will have three vehicles to use and will collect data over a three-year period within its 29-county service territory across central and eastern Pennsylvania.

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“As a utility, we want to be ready for the full-scale commercialization and deployment of electric vehicles and learn how they will likely be used by our customers and how they may affect the electric system,” said David G. DeCampi, president of PPL Electric Utilities. “Taking part in this utility collaborative with GM allows us to test the Chevy Volt’s performance year-round where our employees and customers live.”

With the cars not yet available for sale in Pennsylvania, the study allows PPL Electric Utilities to get a first look at the promising technology. The electric vehicles are said to operate with significantly lower emissions and operating costs as well as savings in energy consumption. The company will provide updates on its findings at www.pplelectric.com/ev.

“The project ultimately will help us educate customers on plug-in electric vehicles, which we hope will be another wise energy choice,” DeCampi said.

During the study, PPL Electric Utilities will provide the car to select employees for their daily use. Researchers are seeking insights into driving habits, actual operating costs and energy consumption, and how best to charge electric vehicles to minimize any negative effects on the electric grid.

Together with EPRI, General Motors and the other utilities, the company will be gathering data that will assist in planning for future upgrades for the electric delivery system and considering how smart grid technologies could better facilitate wide-scale consumer adoption of plug-in electric vehicles.

The program was made possible with a \$30.5 million grant from the Transportation Electrification Initiative administered by the U.S. Department of Energy through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

For more information about the project, visit www.pplelectric.com/ev.

For further information: Lissette Santana, 610-774-5997

