



You might imagine that an electric car is only going to take you around the block a couple of times. Wrong. I can drive the Roadster 240 miles on a single charge – never stopping for fuel. There is nothing staid or boring about the instant, effortless torque of the Roadster’s electric motor or the car’s sleek design. Nothing compares to the shrill of going from zero to 60 in 3.7 to 3.9 second pulse-raising G-force acceleration – your opinion of the power and the promise of electric drive changes forever.

My current environmental efforts involve Plug In America (PIA) non-profit organization. In 2005 a grass-roots gathering of actual and hopeful electric vehicle drivers banded in an attempt to halt the destruction of thousands of production electric vehicles -- as portrayed in the film documentary *Who Killed the Electric Car?*

Although it was unfortunate that PIA was unsuccessful in saving GM’s all-electric EV1, our activism saved hundreds of Toyota and Ford EVs many of which are on the road today. Metaphorically, Plug In America has zoomed from zero to 60 in record time, growing from a grassroots citizen group to a game-changing organization with 27,000 supporters.

As a representative of PIA, I drive my Roadster to local schools in Southern California to discuss EVs and ways we can reduce pollution. The students are always engaged, fascinated and excited. In one fleeting glance their view of an electric car moves from old duffers in

golf carts to the racetrack. My Tesla roadster is Exhibit A to the potential of electric cars yet to be designed and yet to be manufactured.

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Not everyone is able to power their homes and cars by generating their own solar energy. However, electric cars, like those parked in my garage are highly efficient. Approximately 75 percent of the battery’s energy is dedicated to moving the all-electric vehicle. By contrast only about 18 to 32 percent of total energy produced by the internal combustion engine actually moves the car. Energy is lost to

heat, friction and the vibration of hundreds of moving parts that are involved in the combustion process.

We produce less than 40 percent of the crude oil used in the United States. According the U.S. Energy Information Administration, America consumes 101.554 quadrillion Btu, about 21% of the total crude oil produced in the world. On a daily basis, we import nearly 10 million barrels of oil, based on March 2010 daily averages.

As oil from below the ocean floor continues to gush out in the Gulf of Mexico, it’s clear that America needs to reconsider and rethink its transportation fuel choices. In our quest for oil, we also inadvertently despoil indigenous land, destroy beautiful vistas, wipe out important fishing and tourism industries and marine ecosystems.

It’s time to claim a personal victory here: I celebrate the fact that I reduced

my impact on the environment by eliminating over 19 pounds of carbon dioxide per gallon of gasoline. Driving electric cars, I get to skip the oil change, tune-up, smog check, fluids check, muffler change, carburetor adjustment and other required maintenance rituals associated with gasoline vehicles. Time-consuming trips to the gas station have no part in my weekly routine.

