
ELECTRIC CAR AVAILABLE FOR IREA MEMBERS TO TEST-DRIVE

As was mentioned in last month's Director Newsletters, IREA has purchased an electric vehicle, the Ford Transit Connect Electric Van, the first of its kind to be delivered in Colorado. The van is fully electric, meaning it runs on battery power only and has no gas engine. We are continuing to evaluate the Transit in an effort to prepare for potential customer use of electric vehicles in the near future.

We now have some preliminary information on mileage, charging time, cost of operation and other performance characteristics, and we will continue to accumulate data as we put the vehicle through its paces. The Ford Transit Connect lives up to advertised standards: it has a range of 70 miles, and its maximum speed is 75 mph. This vehicle is best suited for local, around-the-town trips, rather than cross-country travel.

One problem we noticed immediately, however, is that it is probably impractical to expect to charge the vehicle from a 110 volt circuit. We had ordered the vehicle with this type of power connector so that anyone we loaned it to would be easily able to charge it. However, on 110 volts it took approximately 21 hours to charge completely from a fully discharged state.

A 220V charger was placed in service for recharging the Transit in late July. During the course of the following four days the vehicle was recharged three times, twice at approximately 50% battery use and once with a drained battery. Charging times were 5.5 hours for charging a 50% drained battery and just under 10 hours for a full charge. The cost per mile varied between \$.054 and \$.06 for electricity usage. At \$3.00 per gallon a vehicle would have to get fifty miles per gallon for an equivalent fuel cost per mile. Cost per day was \$2.08, \$2.17, & \$3.68 for a total of \$7.93 over the period. Delivered kWh was 17.8, 18.6 and 31.5 for a total of 67.9 during the test period.

If you are interested in seeing and driving the Transit Connect, please contact Tim Graham at 303-688-3100, ext. 346, at IREA's Sedalia Headquarters to schedule your appointment. We will continue to evaluate the vehicle and gather comments from individuals who borrow the vehicle for a test drive.

