

NDW Expanding Options for Personal Electric Vehicle Use

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WASHINGTON – As the use of alternative fuel vehicles grows in popularity across the country, the Navy is exploring options for not only purchasing hybrid and electric vehicles for official use, but providing services for personal use as well.

In November 2012, the Navy Exchange (NEX) aboard Naval Support Activity (NSA) Bethesda became the first of three exchanges across the country to offer electric vehicle (EV) charging stations for personal use during a pilot study, which is now exploring other possible locations in Naval District Washington and across the U.S.

At the release of the pilot study, NEX Command Chief Executive Officer Robert J. Bianchi said the program was intended to meet needs of customers who own alternative

fuel vehicles. "Since electricity is considered an alternative fuel, we are also in alignment with the government's goal to reduce petroleum consumption through improvements in fleet fuel efficiencies and the use of alternative fuels," he said. "Electric vehicle charging stations are a win for our customers, for the Navy and for the environment."

Although many installations including Washington Navy Yard offer charging spots for government-owned vehicles, official policy prohibits employees or service members from plugging their vehicles into government power sources. With often limited ranges of some battery-operated electric vehicles, the new NEX stations offer personnel a viable choice for recharging their vehicles.

Teresa Oyler, operations services manager at the Bethesda NEX, said usage of the new station is slowly but steadily increasing as people become aware of its existence.

"It wasn't used much when we first started and we went on board," she said. "Last year, it was used more; and this year it has almost tripled in use."

Oyler said there are currently two units with one cable each, but each station has the possibility to expand to two cables per station if demand increases. Customers may charge their electric or hybrid-electric vehicles at the stations at a rate of \$0.48 per kilowatt.

While most plug-in vehicles are capable of charging on standard outlets, the comparatively low voltage requires charges times of up to 18 hours. By contrast, EV charging stations such as those at the NEX can charge batteries up to 80 percent capacity in as little as a half hour.

In a 2006 report to Congress, the Department of Transportation (DOT) said reduction of tailpipe emissions was the single greatest benefit of alternative fuels, and in 2011 noted the potential for electric and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles to greatly decrease U.S. dependence on oil.

In recent years, more manufacturers have started offering gasoline-electric hybrid vehicles with the benefit of extended range, such as the Toyota Prius and Chevrolet Volt. Electric-only vehicles such as the Nissan Leaf and Tesla Roadster



As the use of electric vehicles is on the rise across the country and within the military, the Navy is exploring options for expanding installation of electric vehicle charging stations not only for official use, but for personal vehicles as well. Personnel are prohibited from charging personal electric vehicles with government-owned outlets, so the Navy is installing EV charging stations such as this at the Navy Exchange in Bethesda. (Photo by Julie Smith)

are also becoming more popular, although offering a more limited range on a battery charge.

In a 2011 literature review of plug-in EVs, the DOT explained that while most Americans' daily drives are shorter than the range of most batteries, consumers expected a greater range, and said that the higher upfront costs compared to traditional gasoline cars are keeping competition down.

Still, Oyler said she as more people become aware of the ability to charge vehicles while they work or shop at the NEX, demand will continue to grow, much as it has in less than two years since the Bethesda station opened.

"Very often when you go down there, they're both in use," she said of the two charging spots. "As it goes forward, I think it's going to get more use."

The new NEX at Naval Support Facility Annapolis, scheduled to be opened in September, was also reviewed as a potential location for EV charging stations. The stations did not make it into the current contract, said Installation Energy Manager Michael Partyka, but there is a possibility for them to be installed in the future if funding is available. The parking lot at the new NEX will feature 20 designated spots low emission and fuel efficient vehicles, he added.

NDW Energy Director Lt. Cmdr. Keith Benson added, "everyone has an important role in building our energy culture throughout Naval District Washington; this includes planning for and integrating alternative fuel infrastructure to drive positive behavior change and reduce annual petroleum consumption."

For more information or to request EV charging stations at your local NEX, contact your installation transportation director, energy manager or NEX representative.

NSA Bethesda NEX: (240) 743-4200

NAS Patuxent River NEX: (301) 342-0614

NSA Annapolis NEX: (410) 757-0005

NSF Indian Head NEX: (301) 743-5414

Navy Yard NEX: (202) 889-7534

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