

# California Clean Cars Campaign

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **What is the California Clean Cars Campaign?**

The Campaign is endorsed by public health leaders, consumer groups, small and mainstream businesses, clean technology firms, local governments, elected officials, organized labor, faith leaders, national security groups, environmental organizations, and other diverse constituencies that support the strongest possible standards for California's groundbreaking Clean Cars Program.

### **What are the clean car standards?**

The California Air Resources Board (ARB) is updating four existing regulations, all part of the Clean Cars Program, in January 2012 (see column to the right). These updated standards would reduce carbon and smog-forming pollution from cars and light-duty trucks, spur the development of advanced technology zero-emission cars like plug-in cars and fuel cells, and put in place the fueling infrastructure for advanced technology vehicles.

### **Why are these new standards needed?**

To clean the air and protect public health: Population growth and people driving greater distances have offset many of the air quality gains we have made over the last 50 years. California is still home to the worst pollution in the nation,<sup>i</sup> with cars and trucks spewing nearly two million pounds of smog-forming pollution a day, or 20 percent of the state's smog-related emissions.<sup>ii</sup>

#### To save consumers money and offer more vehicle choices:

By implementing clean car standards and reducing a vehicle's carbon pollution, the average consumer will pay less to own and operate a new car from the moment it is driven off the dealer's lot. With the price of gasoline at \$4 a gallon, consumers will recoup their investment in about 2.9 years, and save about \$4,000 over the life of the vehicle.<sup>iii</sup> Clean car standards also provide consumers with many vehicle choices including advanced technology gasoline cars, hybrids, plug-in hybrids, and all-electric battery or fuel cell cars that use no gasoline at all.

#### To stimulate the economy and create jobs:

California leads the nation in cleantech investment, attracting hundreds of millions of dollars in venture financing and driving job creation.<sup>iv</sup> An estimated 2,700 direct jobs are created for every \$100 million in venture investment.<sup>v</sup> From 2008 to 2009, green jobs grew at three times the rate of overall job growth.<sup>vi</sup> Many of the clean car companies and the suppliers of the high-tech components are California-based, including Tesla Motors, Quantum Technologies, and Better Place. These companies hold the promise of providing jobs for working families across the state. California's Clean Cars Program, together with federal emissions and fuel economy standards of 60 mpg, could lead to 167,000 new jobs in the state by 2025.<sup>vii</sup>

### **California Clean Cars Program is Four Different Standards**

1. **Low Emission Vehicle-Smog (LEV III-Smog):** This program will make sure new cars and light trucks produce fewer emissions that contribute to smog and harm public health. (The updated rules will apply to vehicles starting in 2014.)
2. **Low Emission Vehicle-Greenhouse Gas (LEV III-GHG):** This program will make sure new cars and light trucks produce fewer emissions that contribute to climate change. (The updated rules will apply to vehicles starting in 2017.)
3. **Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV):** This program will make sure that the newest, gasoline-free, ultra-clean vehicle technologies – such as electric and hydrogen fuel cell cars – are brought to California. (The updated rules will apply to vehicles starting in 2015.)
4. **Clean Fuels Outlet:** This program will make sure we have the infrastructure – including hydrogen for fuel cells and public charging for electric vehicles – in place to support clean, alternative fuel cars.

### **Why are California and the federal government both developing new clean car standards?**

In January 2012, ARB is updating its different, existing vehicle standards in an effort to coordinate them into one regulatory timeframe. Meanwhile, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Transportation are developing national vehicle greenhouse gas and fuel economy standards. President Obama directed the two federal agencies to work with California to develop and adopt a coordinated national standard. ARB intends to accept the federal rules once they are final, assuming they are comparable and sufficient to meet California's unique air quality problems – but the federal rulemaking will take longer than California's, and doesn't address all four vehicle and fuel programs.

### **Will driving electric cars just move the pollution from tailpipes to power plants?**

Electric cars are "zero emission" because no pollution comes from their tailpipes. They get their fuel from the electric power grid and power plants. California's electricity mix is cleaner than the national average, and electric cars operate at much greater efficiencies than internal combustion vehicles. So, charging an electric car in California generates substantially fewer emissions than operating a gas or diesel car. Even the state's coal burning plants are cleaner than those in other states because of California air pollution control laws. Additionally, in 2011 Governor Brown signed a law that requires 33 percent of the state's electricity come from renewable energy by 2020, so California's energy is getting cleaner all the time.

### **Why are rules needed if auto manufacturers are already making these cars?**

Standards have brought us airbags, seat belts, and cleaner cars. Automakers developed and marketed the first electric and gasoline-electric hybrid cars, like the Toyota Prius, largely because of California's standards.

### **Am I going to be forced to buy a certain type of car?**

No – these standards will give consumers more and better vehicle choices. In addition to the vehicle options that already exist, consumers will have cleaner, more fuel-efficient and alternative fuel technologies to choose from across the full fleet of new passenger vehicles.

### **Will alternative fuels and electric charging stations be widely available?**

A successful low- and zero-emission vehicle program is reliant on whether fuel sources are accessible. The ARB is developing a Clean Fuels Outlet (CFO) policy in conjunction with the Clean Cars Program, to ensure that there is a statewide game plan, infrastructure, and adequate supply of alternative fuels.

### **Are clean cars safe and reliable?**

All cars sold in America – including clean cars – must meet stringent safety standards developed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and undergo comprehensive safety analysis and crash tests. Innovative technologies, advanced lightweight materials, and enhanced vehicle designs have made today's cars much safer (while at the same time cleaner) than vehicles of the past. In addition, clean cars are reliable and popular. The Chevrolet Volt plug-in hybrid tops the list of the most satisfying vehicles in the *Consumer Reports* "Buy Again" category in 2011. According to the magazine, 93 percent of Volt plug-in hybrid buyers would buy again. The Ford Fusion Hybrid, Lincoln MKZ Hybrid, and Toyota Prius continue to top the buy again list as well.<sup>viii</sup>

<sup>i</sup> American Lung Association, April 2011, *State of the Air 2011*, <http://www.stateoftheair.org/2011/city-rankings/most-polluted-cities.html>.

<sup>ii</sup> Travis Madsen, Benjamin Davis, and Bernadette Del Chiaro, November 2010, *Clean Cars in California: Four Decades of Progress in the Unfinished Battle to Clean up our Air*, <http://www.environmentalcalifornia.org/uploads/5f/eb/5feb3e1d3a97f815a4e80609febe5d54/Clean-Cars-in-California.pdf>.

<sup>iii</sup> California Air Resources Board, December 2011, *Initial Statement of Reasons for Proposed Rulemaking...* [on Advanced Clean Cars], [http://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/clean\\_cars/clean\\_cars.htm](http://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/clean_cars/clean_cars.htm)

<sup>iv</sup> Cleantech Group, LLC, April 2010, *Cleantech thriving in California under AB 32, shows data*, <http://cleantech.com/news/5755/cleantech-thriving-AB32-data>.

<sup>v</sup> Patrick R. Burtis, May 2006, *Creating Cleantech Clusters: 2006 Update; How innovation and investment can promote job growth and a healthy environment*, *Environmental Entrepreneurs*, <http://www.e2.org/ext/doc/2006%20National%20Cleantech%20FORMATTED%20FINAL.pdf>

<sup>vi</sup> Next 10, January 2011, *Many Shades of Green: Diversity and Distribution of California's Green Jobs*, <http://www.nextten.org/next10/publications/2011.html>.

<sup>vii</sup> Calculated from Roland-Holst, D., May 2011, *Driving California's Economy: How Fuel Economy and Emissions Standards Will Impact Economic Growth and Job Creation*, [http://next10.org/next10/publications/vehicle\\_efficiency.html](http://next10.org/next10/publications/vehicle_efficiency.html)

<sup>viii</sup> ConsumerReports.org, December 2011, *Owner Satisfaction: Chevrolet Volt narrowly edges out Dodge Challenger and Porsche 911*, <http://news.consumerreports.org/cars/2011/12/2011-car-owner-satisfaction-chevrolet-volt-narrowly-edges-out-dodge-challenger-porsche-911.html>.