



American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **ANNUAL RANKING OF GREEN VEHICLES SHOWS PROGRESS DESPITE TOUGH TIMES**

Washington, D.C.: With the auto industry in turmoil and energy prices in flux, the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy today released environmental ratings for model year 2009 vehicles. This is the twelfth year ACEEE has published its rankings as part of *ACEEE's Green Book<sup>®</sup> Online*, the organization's environmental guide to cars and trucks, available at [greencars.org](http://greencars.org).

Despite the beating taken by the industry in 2008 and more tough times ahead, this continues to be an exciting time for green vehicle technology. Manufacturers are fine-tuning their engines and transmissions, improving materials, and adding emissions control technologies to complete the phase-in of Tier 2 tailpipe standards and get a head start on meeting tightened federal fuel economy standards. Worries over the economy and future gas prices are driving interest in high fuel economy vehicles as well. "The economic downturn may put the brakes on technology investment in some sectors," noted ACEEE Transportation Director Therese Langer. "But unstable fuel prices and a domestic auto industry in danger of being left in the dust by its foreign competitors make fuel efficiency technologies an essential investment in this business."

The flurry of activity failed to dislodge the reigning champion of the [Greenest Vehicles](#) list. This year's greenest title goes once again to Honda's natural gas-powered Civic GX. The Toyota Prius and Honda Civic Hybrid claim spots two and three, while the Smart Fortwo Convertible, the Toyota Yaris, and the Nissan Altima Hybrid complete the top six. Others on the [Greenest Vehicles](#) list include conventional and hybrid-electric vehicles from both domestic and foreign automakers. This year, the Chevrolet Cobalt/Pontiac G5 twins and Chevrolet Aveo land in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> spots, respectively, showcasing the improving performance of domestic vehicles in ACEEE's annual ranking.

Just missing out on a top-12 spot are the diesel-powered Volkswagen Jetta and Jetta Sportwagen, part of a new crop of light-duty diesels this year. These notable newcomers mark the official arrival of "clean diesels" that meet emissions standards in fifty states, previously unachieved by diesel-powered vehicles. "We're finally seeing diesels in the running among environmentally preferable vehicles, thanks to new emissions control technologies. Now diesels' intrinsic fuel efficiency advantages can shine," said ACEEE vehicle analyst Shruti Vaidyanathan.

Widely regarded as the pre-eminent buyer's guide to environment-friendly passenger cars, trucks, and SUVs, [greencars.org](http://greencars.org) provides the facts necessary to examine the eco-performance of any 2009 model. Vehicles are analyzed on the basis of a "Green Score," a singular measure that incorporates unhealthy tailpipe emissions, fuel consumption, and emissions of gases that cause global warming.

The [Meanest Vehicles](#) list, dominated by heavy American models and European imports, is topped by the Hummer H2 flex-fuel vehicle this year. Following closely behind are the Lamborghini Murcielago, the GMC Yukon 2500, the Mercedes-Benz G55 AMG, and the Lincoln Navigator. Large, diesel-powered vehicles, previously prominent on the annual [Meanest Vehicles](#) list, are completely absent this year. As a result, 2009's worst-performing vehicle scores two points higher than 2008's meanest.

“With upward movement at the bottom and near the top of the offerings, it’s tempting to conclude that the U.S. is really greening its fleet,” said Vaidyanathan. “Sales figures will tell whether we’re really turning a corner, but putting more fuel-efficient models out there gives consumers a real choice.”

The [greencars.org](#) Web site also identifies a selection of top, widely-available models in each vehicle class. This [Greener Choices](#) list includes trucks and SUVs such as the Toyota Tacoma, Ford Ranger, and Chevrolet Tahoe Hybrid C1500. Cars such as the Honda Fit and Hyundai Sonata top their respective classes. As the list demonstrates, consumers can make greener choices whatever their vehicle needs may be.

In addition to highlighting the year’s [Greenest](#), [Meanest](#), [Greener Choices](#), and best-in-class lists, the [greencars.org](#) Web site contains informational write-ups on model year 2009 highlights, a consumer primer on vehicles and the environment, and advice on how to buy green when shopping for a new car or truck.

Summary “Green Scores” of the 1,400+ configurations of all model year 2009 vehicles are made available to subscribers of *ACEEE’s Green Book® Online* interactive database along with each configuration’s fuel economy, health-related pollution impacts, global warming emissions, and estimated fuel expenses. Subscribers can also build custom lists for comparing vehicles. Monthly and annual subscriptions to *ACEEE’s Green Book® Online* are available at [greencars.org](#). For further information, contact:

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