

Electric cars on trial in the west

Wendy Pyper

A fleet of 11 electrically powered Ford Focus cars will be cruising the streets of Perth by year's end, as part of a two-year trial to research the performance, environmental and economic benefits and infrastructure needs of the electric vehicle industry.

The trial, launched in March, was initiated by CO2 Smart Pty Ltd in collaboration with research partner, the University of Western Australia's Renewable Energy Vehicle Project.

The vehicles will be converted from petrol to electric by EV Works and will be tested by trial partners from state and local government and the private sector.

Up to 12 'fast-recharge' bays will be installed around Perth, which can recharge empty batteries in three hours. The charging stations will collect data relating to charging behaviour, which will be used to forecast power and grid capacity requirements in the future as electric vehicle numbers increase.

The trial is the first step in establishing a knowledge base for widespread use of electric cars in Western Australia – which has some of the largest average commuting distances in the world – and subsequently, the rest of Australia.

CO2 Smart Chief Executive Officer, Terry Mader, and UWA's Professor Thomas Bräunl, said the trial will answer questions about how people will recharge and at what times, and what infrastructure is required on the street or at home.



Credit: Terry Mader, CO2 Smart Pty Ltd

More information

CO2 Smart: www.co2smart.com.au/

University of Western Australia: www.ecm.uwa.edu.au/projects

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