

Re: [SLE] Warning to Americans!(now going OT)

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Source: <http://linux.derkeiler.com/Mailing-Lists/SuSE/2006-05/msg00263.html>

- *From:* James Knott <james.knott@xxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Wed, 03 May 2006 05:58:08 -0400
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Kevanf1 wrote:

On 03/05/06, Randall R Schulz <rschulz@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Carlos,

On Tuesday 02 May 2006 17:04, Carlos E. R. wrote:

The Tuesday 2006-05-02 at 12:37 +0100, Kevanf1 wrote:

... The solar energy is then used to split the water. It doesn't take much in the way of electrical power to produce the two gases after all.

No, it takes the same energy as the combination of hydrogen and oxygen will produce later at the motor (or better, at the energy cell). More, in fact, considering losses.

Sadly, electrolysis is a very inefficient way to produce hydrogen gas. And while it's true we've got so very much more solar energy than we need, even after the biosphere gets everything it needs, it still is a wasteful thing to do with a high-quality form of energy such as electricity. If you want to store the energy, which is of course is a practical necessity, since it's rarely needed in proportion to its availability, you do better to simply pump water uphill! Electromechanical energy conversion (i.e., motors and generators) is a lot more efficient than electrochemical conversion (batteries, fuel cells and electrolysis).

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Cheers,
Carlos Robinson

Randall Schulz

Sorry guys, I should have made myself a little clearer obviously. I haven't said that solar power would be the 'sole' form of automotive power. I merely embrace it as a supplementary form of power.

But those comments about the inefficiency of electrolysis and solar power? It doesn't matter if it is electrolysis produced by the sun's rays (photovoltaic) as it is free and is effectively going to waste right now. Solar photovoltaic panels are getting more and more efficient every year. Why not use them? Who knows, in a few years we might well be able to power the wheels directly from solar power. Ok, we'd all have to walk at night ;-)))) Admittedly, the biggest bug bear in a solar powered car is the environmental cost of producing storage cells for night time use. So we have to look at an alternative to that. The day may come when we simply have to because oil will be too expensive for even millionaires to purchase.

First you have to calculate the total solar energy available per square centimetre. Then factor in the various inefficiencies. Next you calculate how much area you need to meet the requirements etc. Free solar energy doesn't mean much if your car's too big to fit on the roads.

Of course, if anybody else has any suggestions regarding alternative energy solutions then I'm willing to listen.

Well, you could always invent perpetual motion, but then you'd have to worry about SCO claiming you infringed on their IP. ;-)

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