

NJ Allows Hybrids on HOV Lanes

NJ gives access to more hybrids than other states

On May 15, New Jersey began to allow single passenger hybrid vehicles to use HOV lanes. A press release from the DOT quotes Governor Corzine stating that this new policy is a reflection of a commitment *“to addressing the burden of rising gas prices and encouraging fuel conservation.”*

However, the governor’s plan allows every hybrid vehicle to use HOV lanes while other states require that the vehicle get a certain amount of miles per gallon (mpg) on the highway. In New York, the minimum is 40 mpg. In California it’s 45 mpg.

Below is a look at how some of the vehicles whose owners are benefiting from access to HOV lanes stack up against non-hybrid cars who are not given such access. By not placing highway mpg limits on what hybrids can and cannot use HOV Lanes, the state is doing more to look like it is addressing rising gas prices than it is actually doing to address the problem.

List of cars by miles per gallon achieved on highways

Hybrids (allowed in HOV Lanes)

Honda Insight Hybrid—66 miles per gallon
Toyota Prius Hybrid — 51 miles per gallon
Honda Civic Hybrid — 51 miles per gallon
Honda Accord Hybrid — 37 miles per gallon
Ford Escape — 31 miles per gallon
Mazda Tribute Hybrid—29 miles per gallon
Mercury Mariner Hybrid — 29 miles per gallon
Lexus RX400H Hybrid—28 miles per gallon
Toyota Highlander Hybrid — 27 miles per gallon

Non-Hybrids (require 3 riders to use HOV lanes)

VW Beetle (Diesel) — 44 miles per gallon
Toyota Matrix — 36 miles per gallon
Pontiac Vibe — 36 miles per gallon
Ford Focus Station Wagon — 34 miles per gallon
Chevrolet Monte Carlo—31 miles per gallon
Mazda 6 — 31 miles per gallon
Subaru Legacy Wagon — 30 miles per gallon
Mazda Tribute — 29 miles per gallon
Ford Ranger Pickup — 29 miles per gallon