

**Article: Prius Versus HUMMER: Exploding the Myth Which one's more green over a lifetime?**

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<http://www.thecarconnection.com>

( [http://www.thecarconnection.com/Auto\\_News/Green\\_Car\\_News/Prius\\_Versus\\_HUMMER\\_Exploding\\_the\\_Myth.S196.A12220.html](http://www.thecarconnection.com/Auto_News/Green_Car_News/Prius_Versus_HUMMER_Exploding_the_Myth.S196.A12220.html) )

In reference to Sudbury Ontario nickel mine, the headline reads, "Toyota factory turns landscape to arid wilderness."

- It isn't a Toyota factory at all. It is a mine.
- The large majority of the environmental damage from nickel mining in and around Sudbury was caused by mining practices that were abandoned decades ago
- The automaker has, in fact, only been purchasing significant amounts of nickel from the Sudbury , Ontario , Inco mine for its batteries in recent years.
- Out of the Inco mine's 174,800-ton output in 2004, Toyota purchased 1000 tons, just over a half-percent of its output.
- Nickel used in many other items. stainless steel, chrome, etc.

CNW's "Hybrids Consumer More Energy in Lifetime Than Chevrolet's Tahoe SUV."

CNW's "Dust to Dust: The Energy Cost of New Vehicles from Concept to Disposal,"

- Methodology is unclear
  - Union of Concerned Scientists, thinks that CNW's results and apparent methodology bring red flags.
  - "This study has been completely contradicted by studies from MIT, Argonne National Labs and Carnegie Mellon's Lifecycle Assessment Group."
- The study uses an unrealistically low estimated lifetime for hybrids, and that there's no data to support its assumptions
  - Prius is expected to go 109,000 miles over its lifetime
  - Hummer H1 would go 379,000 miles over its lifetime
- CNW alleges that automakers - specifically mentioning Toyota - don't include the energy that goes into modules that are built by suppliers and then shipped to the assembly plant.
  - Toyota insists that its methods include all materials and components that go into the vehicle, not only those manufactured internally by the automaker.
- Toyota concedes that there is more energy required in the materials production stage for its hybrids, but says that it is overwhelmingly made up by less energy used during its driving lifetime.
- CNW only included the so-called design and development cost of models sold so far, not on the potential volume of that technology in the long run.
- The study looks to take into account how many vehicles have been produced by existing factories so far, not how many vehicles might be produced over the lifetime of the factories.
  - Toyota and other automakers who have recently established more efficient factories lose out, even though the facilities might be more efficient.
- CNW also includes overall "social energy expenditures," which it describes in very little detail except with a coffee analogy, alleging that while most peer-review papers only analyze the energy demands from the grinding of the coffee forward, the firm's report analyzes everything including the "coffee mug maker."
  - But if the mug could also just as well be used for tea or hot chocolate, do you still include that cost?
  - As you dig farther up the supply chain, the answers seem to get fuzzier, and without figures or meaty methodology details from CNW it's unclear what kind of assumptions were made.
- Some of the greater cost of hybrids, according to CNW, is due to the higher cost of recycling hybrids. On an energy basis vehicles cost an energy-equivalent average of \$119,000 to recycle while hybrids average \$140,000.
  - Toyota says that credible scientific research has found that end-of-life recycling and disposal use disproportionately small amounts of energy.
  - Toyota has said that CNW's study does not include any specific information on its methodology or data sources, and it does not at all agree with the bulk of scientific studies on vehicle lifecycle analysis, many of which conclude that about 85 percent of total lifetime energy use occurs in driving the vehicle. CNW's study shows these ratios approximately reversed.