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## Dump mpg, say Toyota and Honda

**BYLINE:** Lindsay **Chappell**

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Toyota and Honda want to turn America's method of measuring fuel economy upside down. Instead of mpg, they want to measure gallons per mile.

Both automakers have approached the EPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to argue their case.

Dave Hermance, executive engineer at Toyota Motor Corp.'s U.S. technical center, said: "What we've got now, miles per gallon, is not a good metric."

Toyota and Honda Motor Co. would prefer window stickers that say how many gallons of fuel a vehicle likely will consume per 1,000 miles driven. That would provide a more accurate picture of how much fuel a vehicle such as the Toyota Prius gasoline-electric hybrid consumes over time, Hermance said last week at the Management Briefing Seminars here.

Both automakers are hearing negative comments from buyers whose hybrids get fuel economy far below the EPA rating.

Hybrids are most fuel-efficient in stop-and-go driving. So a one-tank fuel economy calculation might be disappointing if it measures predominantly highway travel.

The EPA gives the Prius a 55 mpg rating. Instead, Toyota would like the sticker to say that it consumes 18.5 gallons of fuel per 1,000 miles.

Said Hermance: "What matters to people is how much gas they're going to have to buy over a certain period, and how different that is from some other vehicle."

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