

Effective Energy Upgrades for La Luz Units: Electric Vehicles

Electric vehicles are here and are becoming mainstream. They will represent a critical factor in reducing emissions and curtailing climate change. Wind generation in New Mexico is now displacing coal as a generating source. Onsite solar generation presents a unique opportunity to charge an electric vehicle and to be part of the energy solution.

La Luz garages were not wired for electric vehicle charging. Most garages are metered on a common 110 volt lighting circuit which is billed to the Homeowner's association. Living units with garages on the same lot can be easily upgraded with a 40 AMP, 220 volt circuit that will support vehicle charging. A cable is simply run from the breaker panel underground or along the courtyard wall to the garage where a suitable outlet is installed. The cost of this additional wiring is about \$1,000.00. The cost of fueling and electric vehicle is 1/10th the cost of gasoline.

Several La Luz units have been retrofitted with solar panels. With onsite generation, the cost of operating a vehicle becomes next to zero with minimal environmental impact. Electric vehicles have great acceleration. They can easily and silently keep up with the Mustangs, Camaros and Chargers on the habitual race up Coors.

Units on Tumbleweed and some Tennis Ct and Berm units do not have adjacent garages. These separate buildings with garages for multiple units represent a challenge for separate metering and delivery of 220 volt current. Eventually, these buildings will require separate meters for each garage and perhaps separate solar generating arrays. It may also be wise for the community to consider communal charging pedestals where homeowners and visitors will be able to charge their vehicles in the Pool or Tennis Ct. parking areas.

Electric vehicles are here. They will quickly replace internal combustion driven cars and our units will need to be outfitted accordingly for charging. It is one of the challenges of our time.