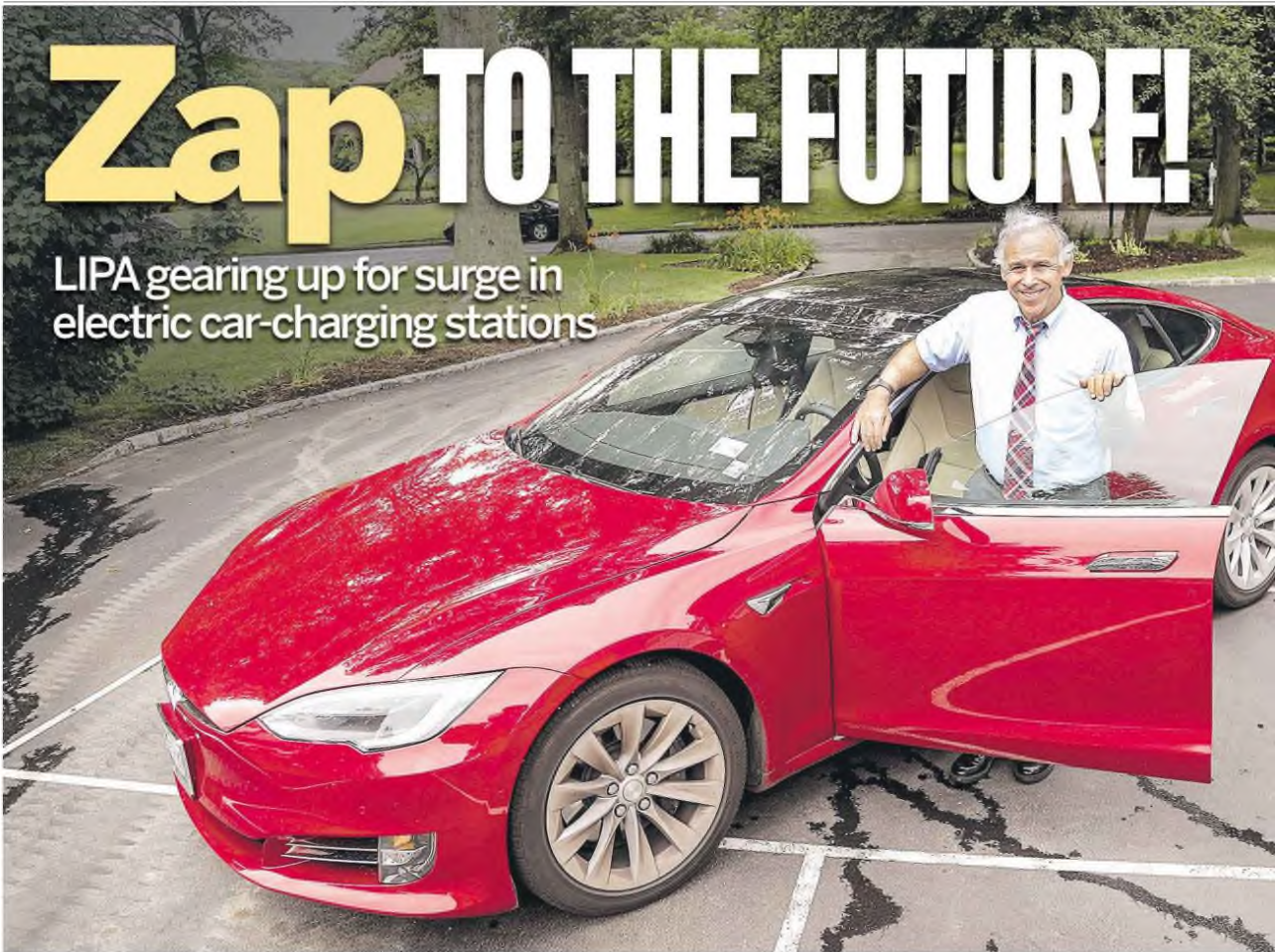


A6

## TOP STORIES



# Zap TO THE FUTURE!

LIPA gearing up for surge in electric car-charging stations

BY MARK HARRINGTON  
mark.harrington@newsday.com

LIPA is making early preparations for the prospect of electric vehicles expanding on Long Island, considering special rates for overnight charging and venues to make public charging more widely available.

Electric charging stations, which can get an electric car back on the road in under an hour, already dot Long Island. As of this spring, there were 112 in Nassau and Suffolk, and there are plans in Suffolk to install 32 more. Towns from East Hampton to North Hempstead have installed them, Stony Brook University has a station at its Advanced Energy Center, and some companies have them for work-

ers. LIPA's headquarters at the Omni Building in Uniondale has charging electric vehicle stations in its parking garage.

At a Long Island Power Authority conference last month, Brian Jones, an expert in the electric vehicle market, gave officials a primer on just how utilities across the nation are making way for the no-emission vehicles.

The stakes are potentially large. LIPA at one point had projected a growth in electric use in the coming decade based in part on the expectations that electric vehicles could be widespread, along with the need for more power plants. More recently, LIPA and its contractor, PSEG Long Island, predicted that electric demand should re-

main relatively flat over the next two decades, based on increases in distributed renewables and efficiency measures.

"Automakers are planning to unveil dozens of new electric and plug-in hybrids over the next few years, and we are focused on supporting our customers' transportation choices with affordable programs and convenient public charging stations," LIPA chief executive Tom Falcone said.

Earlier this year, LIPA approved a new workplace charging program to place the units at companies across the Island. The utility is meeting with potential partners to assess additional programs that encourage public charging infrastructure and off-peak charging, planned

for the next 12 to 18 months.

#### Rate plans in early stages

Still, LIPA spokesman Sid Nathan noted the utility's electric vehicle rate plans are just in the early stages.

Officials "can't put an exact time frame on when the utility would present a new rate design scheme on electric vehicles for Long Islanders at this point," he said in a written statement. "They're working on it, but long-term factors like industry development, battery technology, and volume of [electric vehicles] are important for optimal rate design."

With new electric vehicles set to hit the market this year that can run for greater distances — over 200 miles — on

a single charge and lower vehicle prices imminent, some say the market here could be set for expansion.

"It's definitely coming," Jones, senior vice president of MJ Bradley & Associates, a Concord, Massachusetts, consulting firm, told LIPA trustees. "This is a race. Every major automaker is bringing multiple models to market."

Market leader Tesla on Friday was scheduled to see the first of its \$35,000 Model 3 vehicles roll off the production line. Volvo last week announced that all its new car models launched after 2019 will be electric vehicles or hybrids.

Jones noted that New York State had just under 18,000 electric vehicles statewide as of

NEWSDAY, MONDAY, JULY 10, 2017 newsday.com

# TOP STORIES

A7



Environmental attorney Fred Eisenbud with his Tesla Model S electric car. He said he isn't concerned about battery limitations.

NEWSDAY / JOHN PARASKEVAS

Eisenbud said, noting that Tesla maintains chargers around 175 miles apart at easily accessed locations along the way. When he's home, the garage charger for his car has his Tesla ready for the road by morning. Because he has solar panels on his roof that produce more electricity than he uses, he's never seen an excess charge on his bill for the car charger.

### Effect of gasoline prices

One market factor that may be limiting expansion of the electric vehicle market is the price of gasoline. Electric vehicles and hybrids saw a period of expansion when gasoline hovered at the \$4-a-gallon mark. Since then gas has remained in the \$2 range, with expectations that it will remain there.

One of the primary drivers for electric vehicles has been federal and state incentives, Jones said. There's currently an up-to-\$7,500 federal tax credit. New York State offers up to \$2,000 in rebates for electric cars, and it plans to expand the current 1,600 charging stations.

The state is planning for a market of 850,000 electric vehicles by 2025, Jones said.

Welcoming electric vehicles allows the state to meet green-

house-gas emissions targets in a way that LIPA's current focus on power plants may not so quickly address. Nationwide, the transportation sector contributes around 40 percent to greenhouse gas emissions, Jones said, about as much as power plants.

But on Long Island, where around 40 percent of the power is imported from off-island plants, the impact of cars, buses and trucks on emissions may be greater.

More than a decade ago, the state Department of Environmental Conservation found that power plants on Long Island accounted for about 20 percent of nitrogen oxide pollutants emitted during the high ozone period of May 15

through Sept 15. On-road motor vehicles were responsible for 47 percent. Off-road vehicles such as boats, diesel trains and airplanes contributed another 22 percent.

By 2011, with emissions overall decreasing on Long Island, power plants' share of nitrogen oxides had fallen to 5.27 percent, the DEC said. On-road vehicles held steady at just over 47 percent.

One big factor is that traditional baseload power plants like those in Northport, Island Park and Port Jefferson have been used considerably less, and a new plant in Yaphank called Caithness uses highly efficient technology that makes it considerably cleaner than the older plants. What's more, all the Long Island power plants

now use natural gas as their primary fuel, reducing emissions even further.

Jones suggested policy-makers have a vested interest in focusing on car emissions. "There's no other way to achieve [emissions reduction] targets without the electrification of the transportation sector," he said.

But at the same time, he noted, "consumers aren't beating down the doors to buy these vehicles."

He blamed insufficient education and awareness, "suboptimal" power rate designs for the cars, and a lack of charging stations. "There needs to be a rapid market transformation," he said.

Some states are leading the charge.

California has committed more by far to electric chargers than any other state. By 2025, it's expected to have spent \$1.76 billion expanding the availability of chargers alone, according to Jones. New York is projected to spend just under \$1 billion by that time.

New York State plans to nearly double the current network of 1,600 charging stations by the end of next year, to 3,000.

### LONG ISLAND ELECTRIC CHARGING STATIONS

**112** exist

**32** planned

### NUMBER OF ELECTRIC CARS

New York State under **18,000**

Suffolk **3,614**

Nassau **2,336**



JEFF BACHNER

Schumer urges the feds to study Coco Loko in Manhattan yesterday.

## Schumer to FDA: Probe chocolate energy powder

BY LAURA FIGUEROA  
laura.figueroa@newsday.com

Sen. Chuck Schumer yesterday called on the Food and Drug Administration to investigate a "snortable" chocolate powder that is being marketed as an energy stimulant.

Schumer (D-N.Y.) said in a letter to FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb he is concerned a new product called Coco Loko could be misleading consumers by marketing itself as an energy-boosting chocolate powder, even though it's also made with "powerful energy drink stimulants."

"I implore you investigate inhalable caffeine so that we may avoid exposing our families and children to any unnecessary harm," Schumer said in the letter.

Coco Loko, which sells online for \$24.99, is manufactured by Legal Lean, an Orlando, Florida-based company. Its website claims the product, made from raw cacao beans, will "give you a steady rush of euphoric energy." The powder, which is supposed to be consumed through the nose, includes Ginkgo biloba, taurine and guarana, ingredients commonly found in caffeinated energy drinks.

The powder has not been approved by the FDA, according to the Washington Post.

Schumer, in a news release, criticized Legal Lean for marketing Coco Loko "like a drug," with online promises of providing "a state of euphoria similar to the feeling of ecstasy." Schumer said teens might be drawn to the unregulated product believing it is merely powdered chocolate.

"Normalizing stimulants and drug consumption-like behavior is anything but harmless for our young people," Schumer said, adding that there has been a national uptick in the number of adolescents ages 12 to 17 treated for energy drink-related emergencies. In 2011, there were 1,499 such cases in the United States, Schumer said.

In April, David Allen Cripe, a 16-year-old South Carolina student, died after drinking an excessive amount of caffeine in a two-hour period, according to a medical examiner's report. Cripe's heart rhythm suffered an irregularity after consuming a cafe latte, a large Diet Mountain Dew and an energy drink, doctors said.

Officials with Legal Lean did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

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