

In a windowless workshop near the county landfill, a small Raleigh company has spent the past year trying to solve the nation's energy crisis one car at a time.

The result: A car that breaks a once-unimaginable fuel efficiency barrier and delivers 100 miles per gallon. The spare battery costs less than 75 cents to charge and gives the plug-in Prius about a 35-mile range solely on electric power, making gasoline optional on short commutes. Retrofitting Priuses has become a full-time occupation for the Advanced Vehicle Research Center.

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