

The Shocking Story of the Electric Car

General idea:

Myths are powerful things. Here at the Postal Museum, we want to bust some myths related to green mail transportation! In this activity, we're inviting museum visitors to test their knowledge in a fun game show.



Audience:

- Families
- Keep your language simple so that adults *and* kids can answer!

Goal:

- Bust myths people have about electric cars
- Provide historical background for a modern question: what is the best way to move the mail? People have struggled with this since colonial times!

Materials:

- Important dates and accompanying facts
- Sign including a timeline or just the relevant years
- Movable board pieces containing the facts

Checklist:

- Think of 3-4 assumptions people make about electric cars. (For example: they're really expensive.)
- Get familiar with the summary
- Create 5-6 questions to ask on your game show
 - At least one question should be based on a photo or image
 - At least one question should use a "shocking" number
- Quiz somebody in the room to test your questions
- Develop strategies to turn wrong answers into learning moments
- Design a game board to present the questions



Welcome to the game show!

What do you need to know?

1900

28% of all cars are electrics. The Post Office Department is experimenting with electric vehicles too as early as 1900-1909!

1910-1920

The U.S. Post Office Department controls the largest civilian vehicle fleet in the world. Electric vehicles are an important part of the fleet in the early years.

1930—1940

Oil is more economical than batteries and gasoline cars are better suited to longer roads. Automobile companies focus on gasoline-powered vehicles.

1970

Attention momentarily focuses on electric vehicles during temporary oil shortages, only to return to gasoline-powered vehicles when shortages end.

1990

Rising oil costs put the electric car back on the map.

2002

The United States Postal Service (USPS) drives more than 1.2 billion miles each year.

In 2002, the USPS introduced the Flexible Fuel Vehicle which can be operated on 85% ethanol fuel, gas, or any combination of the two fuels in the same tank. In 2009, 37,000 are on the U.S. roads.

2009

In 2009 30 electric vehicles are used for short driving distance (40 miles per charge) and are considered reliable. The T3 is USPS latest electric vehicle. It is used in Florida, Arizona and California.



Connections?

What if you could design your own mail vehicle? Go visit the Invention Lab!

Can electric vehicles be used everywhere? Find out at the **Rocky Road: Going Green on the Mean Streets**

Goals of Green Ways to Move the Mail

The goals of Green Ways to Move the Mail are:

- People realize that the mail moves.
- Moving the mail has an impact on the environment.

Participants in today's workshop will be the leaders who make important decisions in the future, including decisions about how the mail moves!

Here are things that you can look for, questions you could ask:

On March 21st:

- Teens realize that moving the Mail is a huge challenge that has a big impact on the environment.
- Teens work hard in teams to present high quality activities.
- Why do you think mail transportation matters?

Postal Fun facts:

Here are Postal fun facts, don't hesitate to share them with our visitors, their reactions to them could be funny!

203 billion: Total mail volume processed in 2008, in pieces

221,000: Number of vehicles in our fleet — the largest civilian fleet in the world

1.2 billion: Number of miles driven each year by letter carriers and professional truck drivers

121 million: Number of gallons of fuel used in 2008

USPS operate the world's largest fleet of **alternative fuel-capable vehicles** — **more than 43,000** — that can use clean fuels such as ethanol, compressed natural gas, liquid propane gas, electricity and bio-diesel.

Electric vehicles have been delivering mail in New York City since 2001.

USPS is constantly **streamlining mail delivery routes** to reduce driving time and fuel consumption.

USPS has a "fleet of feet," delivering in the most environmentally friendly way possible. More than 10,000 letter carriers never get in a vehicle at all.

The Postal Service moves mail using planes, trains, trucks, cars, boats, ferries, helicopters, subways, float planes, hovercrafts, T-3s, street cars, mules, bicycles and human feet.

Most Unusual Delivery Method — mule trains in Arizona. Each mule carries about 130 pounds of mail, food, supplies and furniture down the 8-mile trail to the Havasupai Indians, averaging 41,000 pounds per week.

Another Unusual Delivery Method — the JW Westcott is a 45-foot contract mail boat out of Detroit, MI, that delivers mail to ships passing by the Detroit River. The JW Westcott even has its own ZIP Code (48222).

The longest rural delivery route in the country is 176.7 miles in Fordville, ND.

Most Isolated — Located in the farthest reaches of northern Alaska, the Anaktuvuk Pass Post Office is the only link to the outside world for the residents who live there. There are no roads to the town and everything must be flown in. (So how do they order pizza?)