

Press release

Orkan opens two hydrogen refuelling stations.

Energy companies collaborate in the energy shift.

On Friday the 15th of June, Orkan will open two hydrogen refuelling stations. One of the fuelling stations will be located on Vesturlandsvegur in Reykjavik, while the other one will be at Fitjar in Reykjanesbær. The third fuelling station will be opened in the beginning of next year.

Hydrogen production and its use is the key to Iceland's energy sustainability. Hydrogen is the only energy source that can be produced domestically in sufficient quantities to sustain the national vehicle fleet, alongside the electric car implementation. These are some of the points that Orkan wants to convey on the Hydrogen-day, June 15th 2018.

Hydrogen as an energy carrier

The increased global emphasis on renewable energy sources such as wind, water and solar energy has eluded no one. Production time and capacity of these energy sources cannot be fully managed and the energy production rarely corresponds entirely with the energy demand. This creates an immense need for energy storage. Specialists in the field have concluded that the most effective way for energy storage is to use hydrogen as an energy carrier. Hydrogen thusly creates an opportunity to utilize otherwise wasted energy and optimize the use of sustainable energy sources.

In Iceland there are exceptional resources in electrical energy production and great opportunities to convert electricity to hydrogen. Therefore the country is well equipped to build enough supplies to power the national car fleet.

By emphasizing the hydrogen implementation of the car fleet, the speed and burden of building an electrical infrastructure which accompanies electrical car implementation, can be reduced. Using the combination of hydrogen and electricity as an energy source will support the goal of making Iceland fossil fuel-free in the future.

Orka Náttúrunar (ON Power), a company that has been in the forefront in the development of electrical vehicle infrastructure, will produce the hydrogen provided by Orkan at its geothermal power plant at Hellisheiði.

Fuel Cell Vehicles

There are many benefits of fuel cell vehicles. First of all, they have zero emissions and cause no pollution. The only waste from the exhaust pipe is pure water. The declared range for fuel cell vehicles is much higher than the range of most other type of electric cars, or 5-600 km. Fuel cell vehicles are also a viable option for those who are unable to charge their vehicles. The cars are fuelled at Orkan hydrogen refuelling stations the same way a diesel or a petrol vehicle would be, and the refuelling only takes 3-5 min. There are no charging stations involved with fuel cell vehicles, it's just like owning a diesel or petrol car, except the there is no pollution from the car. In fact there is actually a positive carbon footprint, as the car absorbs air and filters it before releasing it into the atmosphere cleaner than before. Since the cars release pure water that binds the dust from the roads, the cars aid in combating dust pollution.

Toyota and Hyundai are importing fuel cell vehicles to Iceland. Very few are left of the Toyota Mirai cars and all of the Hyundai vehicles have been sold. More cars are expected to arrive this fall including the Hyundai Nexa.

Other car manufacturers have started production on fuel cell vehicles such as; Honda and Daimler. In 2018-2020 others plan to follow suit such as; Audi, BMW, Nissan, Ford, GM and Volkswagen.

Many companies in Iceland have already procured fuel cell vehicles, i.e., City of Reykjavik, Keilir, HS Veitur, Landsvirkjun, Veitur, Orkuveita Reykjavíkur, Orka náttúrunnar og Skeljungur.

Strætó bs., is in the process of procuring fuel cell city buses, which are planned to be in use by the end of year 2019.

Energetic cooperation

The opening of the hydrogen refuelling stations in Iceland is part of a project by the European Union titled H2ME-2. The project is sponsored by Fuel Cells and Hydrogen Joint Undertaking in compliance with grant agreement nr. 700350. The EU Research and Innovation Programme, Horizon 2020, Hydrogen Europe and Hydrogen Europe Research are also a part of the project.

The objective of the project is to develop infrastructure for fuel cell vehicles around Europe. It is already possible to drive such a vehicle from Bergen, Norway down to Rome, Italy. Increasing the supply of fuel cell vehicles is also a goal, and therefore car manufacturers are also participating in the project.

Icelandic New Energy has paved the way in the energy shift for the past years and decades in Iceland with to name a few, its involvement in projects relating to electric, methane and hybrid cars. Icelandic New Energy had the incentive and has provided an invaluable support in the process of implementing the new hydrogen refuelling stations being opened now. Icelandic New Energy is also responsible for the amount of interest by foreign car manufacturers, in Iceland as a new and emerging market for fuel cell vehicles.

Hydrogen advancing everywhere

The foundation of the collaborative European project mentioned earlier, is based on the vision of European leaders that hydrogen is an important part of the solution to fully utilize the energy from sustainable energy sources.

This vision is not limited to Europe, hydrogen refuelling stations are being developed and built all around the globe. Japan has decided to become a hydrogen fuelled society and the government has teamed up with car manufacturers such as; Toyota, Honda and Nissan to achieve this. The state of California in the U.S has always been a leader in nature preservation, and already there are 35 operating hydrogen refuelling stations and 20 more being built around the state. S-Korea also has plans to build one hundred hydrogen refuelling stations by 2030, and there are already hydrogen refuelling stations operating in China, Australia, United Arab Emirates, India and Brazil to name a few.

Opening - agenda

The formal opening of the hydrogen refuelling stations will be at 9.30 at Orkan's multi energy station, at Vesturlandsvegur, where from then onwards hydrogen, diesel, petrol and soon an express charging station from ON will be available. The hydrogen fuelling station at Fitjar, Reykjanesbæ will be opened following the first opening ceremony at 12.00.

Detailed program:

09:30 – Hendrik Egholm, CEO, Skeljungur.

09:40 – Bjarni Már Júlíusson, CEO, ON Power.

09.50 – Inauguration of hydrogen refuelling station at Vesturlandsvegur in Reykjavík.

10:00 – End of ceremony in Reykjavík.

12:00 – Inauguration of hydrogen refuelling station in Fitjar in Reykjanesbæ.

The hydrogen refuelling station in Reykjavik will be inaugurated by Ingunn Agnes Kro, who has been the project manager of the hydrogen refuelling stations on behalf of Orkan, as well as her mother and daughter. Ingunn's mother, Valgerður Sverrisdóttir, inaugurated the hydrogen refuelling station that was at the same location, 15 years ago and was the first hydrogen refuelling station in the world available to the public. Ingunn's daughter, Ylfa Hjaltadóttir, enjoys swimming.

Members of the press are particularly welcome. Interviews will be provided following the inaugurations, if requested.

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