

Dubai International Academic City to reserve 5% parking space for green cars

October 12, 2009

Dubai International Academic City (DIAC), the world's only free zone dedicated to international higher education and a member of Tecom Investments, today announced a green car parking initiative that provides reserved slots for low-emitting, fuel efficient vehicles and hybrid cars.

Aimed at reducing carbon emissions at the academic cluster, DIAC will allot five per cent of the total basement parking bays next to the building entrances for 'green cars'. Lower emission vehicles include not only hybrid or electric cars but also mass produced vehicles by some automobile manufacturers.

Dr Ayoub Kazim, Executive Director, Dubai International Academic City, said:

"The special parking bays for low emission cars come as part of our commitment to comply with Tecom Investments' Sustainable Development Policy. Our aim is to raise awareness on 'cleaner' automobiles and motivate people to buy and use those vehicles that utilize green-friendly and fuel efficient technology."

Dr Kazim added, "As the region's leading academic cluster, we regard our ethical responsibility includes educating and informing the community about the benefits of cleaner and greener technologies to preserve the environment. It is also our firm belief that organizations can enormously benefit by adopting similar measures that contribute to promoting environment-friendly practices."

The green car parking initiative is being implemented in association with Tecom's Sustainable Energy and Environment Division (SEED).

Ali bin Towaih, Executive Director of SEED, Tecom Investments, said, "The 'green car' initiative at DIAC is one of the first in the region and re-affirms Tecom Investment's leadership role in this area. DIAC's pioneering move will effectively end the debate on whether to make green cars available in Dubai first or to introduce facilities that support green cars. Our sustainable development policy and the systematic implementation have thus created a whole new clean-technology system in the region that will leave a positive impact on the economy, environment and the society."

Basement car parks are preferred by DIAC community and due to the 'first-come-first-served' policy, none of the car parks are reserved for private parking. Only the parking bays for 'green cars' are exclusively reserved for the privileged owners of such vehicles.

The DIAC move will help reduce pollution from automobiles that contribute to 51% of the CO2 emissions, thereby mitigating the carbon footprint. Studies have shown that each gallon of gasoline burnt creates 20 pounds of CO2 and on an average a vehicle emits six to nine tonnes of CO2 per year.

The criteria adopted for selecting the green cars is based on international standards. The low emission and fuel efficient vehicles are defined as vehicles that are either classified as Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) by the California Air Resources Board or have achieved a minimum green score of 40 on the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE) annual vehicle rating guide. Low emission car = ZEV (zero emission vehicle) =

minimum energy star of 40.

The green car initiative follows the LEED certification for the Dubai International Academic City Phase-III complex that has achieved the coveted status as the first in the Middle East to receive such classification.

Other green features at DIAC include energy metering for various end users, de-lamping of offices, and reducing the lighting energy index from 21-W per square meter to 10-W per square meter that has led to a 52% reduction in power consumption.

The cluster also makes significant utilization of locally or regionally made products. The planting of cactus trees and 'ghaf', a native tree that requires little or no irrigation or maintenance, the use of additives in the soil for reducing water consumption to 50% and requiring lesser NPK fertilizers are some of DIAC's vital green-friendly landscaping initiatives.

The Dubai International Academic City currently hosts more than 30 reputed universities of higher learning from diverse regions, including the US, the UK, Belgium, Iran, Russia, Australia, Sri Lanka, France, Pakistan and India. The cluster currently caters to the academic requirements of over 12,000 students.

(AME Info)