



For Immediate Release: February 27, 2012

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First Public EV Charging Stations in Solvang

Ribbon Cutting is Thursday, March 1, 2012 at 10 AM

Veterans Memorial Hall, 1745 Mission Drive, Solvang

The City of Solvang, the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District, the Community Environmental Council, and others welcome six new public charging stations, with dozens of additional stations arriving shortly throughout Santa Barbara County.

Jim Richardson, Solvang Mayor and Vice Chair of the Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District Board will cut the ribbon on the first public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in Santa Barbara County on **Thursday, March 1, 2012 at 10 AM** at the Veterans Memorial Hall, 1745 Mission Drive in Solvang. These are the first of dozens of stations being constructed throughout Santa Barbara County as part of Coulomb Technologies' [ChargePoint America](#) program. The public is invited to attend the ceremony with elected officials and community leaders.

"Electric vehicles achieve 100 miles per gallon equivalent, produce zero tailpipe emissions, and reduce greenhouse gas pollution 75 percent on California's green electricity grid," said Michael Chiacos, Transportation Specialist with the Community Environmental Council. "They benefit our economy by using domestically produced electricity rather than foreign oil. Drivers save money as well, as off peak electricity costs the equivalent of \$1/gallon – a considerable savings as \$5/gallon for gasoline looms."

The new public charging stations allow electric vehicle drivers to expand the places they can drive, and will charge a car two to four times faster than a regular 120-volt outlet.

There are three charging locations now active in Solvang, each with two charging ports, for a total of six charging spots—all open 24/7: Veterans Memorial Hall Parking Lot, 1745 Mission Drive; City Parking Lot 1 at 1576 Mission Drive; and City Parking Lot 3 at 482 Alisal Road. There are never any parking fees in Solvang's public parking lots and the City of Solvang expects fees for using the charging stations to cost \$1.25-\$2.00/hour.

Solvang Mayor Jim Richardson stated, "We are proud to be the first City in the County to see the importance of electric cars in our future and to provide our locals, businesses and tourists the convenience of charging up in Solvang."

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Tracy Farhad, Executive Director of the Solvang Conference & Visitors Bureau remarked, "We encourage visitors to stay, play, dine, shop and get charged up in Solvang. It's safe to say now that Solvang is just a charge away from LA!"

"We are excited to see this charging station installed in the beautiful Village of Solvang," said Dave Van Mullem, Director of Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District. "County residents and tourists will be able to charge their electric vehicles here, at a convenient midpoint in our county, and this first station marks the beginning of a regional electric vehicle corridor. As gas prices rise towards all-time highs, these vehicles will be even more attractive to consumers. Cars and trucks are a major source of air pollution in Santa Barbara County, and as we see more electric vehicles – with zero tailpipe emissions - on the road we will all benefit from cleaner air."

Soon, the County of Santa Barbara will greatly expand this network, installing 18 charging spots at nine County owned sites in Santa Maria, Lompoc, Santa Barbara, Goleta, and Carpinteria. These stations are funded by the ChargePoint America program, which awards free charging stations to municipal partners, and is providing over 4,600 charging stations throughout America as part of a \$37 million grant program. Funding for the stations comes from the Department of Energy, the California Energy Commission, and private sources. Cities in San Luis Obispo and Ventura Counties have also added charging stations in recent months to join the hundreds of public stations that are now available throughout California.

All of the charging stations are a part of Coulomb's [ChargePoint® Network](#). The ChargePoint Network is the largest network of independently owned charging stations in the world providing EV drivers features including the ability to: help with trip planning, manage the cost of charging, and find and operate public ChargePoint-enabled stations. [ChargePoint locations](#) are included on all [ChargePoint mobile phone applications](#) for iPhone, Android and Blackberry. The mobile apps provide an easy way to locate stations near any specified address, get turn-by-turn directions, and even start and stop a charging session directly from a smart phone. Additionally, these apps allow drivers to utilize ChargePoint Network's station reservation feature. Drivers can locate reservable stations, and then make, view and cancel a reservation directly from a smart phone. Visit the [ChargePoint Network](#) to locate stations.

Santa Barbara County is considered an early adopter market by utilities and car companies, and already hundreds of electric vehicles like the Nissan LEAF™ and Chevrolet Volt have been purchased locally. By the end of 2012, the offerings will expand from these two vehicles to a dozen. The Ford Focus EV, the Toyota Plug in Prius, the Mitsubishi i, and the Tesla Model S are all expected to be released in spring or summer 2012.

To prepare for electric vehicles, the Community Environmental Council is leading the Plug in Santa Barbara effort, a group of government, utility, business and other stakeholders working to build public charging infrastructure, reduce barriers to electric vehicles, and attract state and federal funding to our region. To follow the Plug in Santa Barbara efforts, "like" Plug in Santa Barbara on Facebook, or visit www.cecsb.org

About ChargePoint America

The \$37 million ChargePoint America program is made possible by a \$15M grant funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act through the Transportation Electrification Initiative administered by the Department of Energy. ChargePoint America will provide 4,600 public and home ChargePoint Networked Charging Stations, adding to the existing ChargePoint Network. Coulomb will work together with its distribution and industry partners to evaluate the demand from the respective geographic regions and allocate charging stations based on this and other factors. The ChargePoint America project will collect data characterizing vehicle use and charging patterns. Idaho National Labs will analyze the data. www.chargepointamerica.com