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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JULY 22, 2008**

A Short Drive to Tomorrow: Plug-In 2008 Conference & Exposition Opens
Inaugural Event Focuses on Plug-In Hybrid Technology, Market Research and Policies

At a time of record oil and gas prices, and increasing concerns about energy security and climate change, the Plug-In 2008 Conference & Exposition opened today in San Jose, Calif., to showcase the latest technological advances, market research and policy initiatives shaping the future of plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) – a future that’s just a short drive away.

The three-day international conference brings together automotive manufacturers, component suppliers, electric utilities, government agencies, academia, the environmental community and others to address the most current technical research, the business case for PHEVs, the impact of current policies and regulations, and clean-tech entrepreneurs’ ideas to enhance and expand the PHEV market. In addition, the exposition floor features approximately 35 exhibitors displaying plug-in and pure electric vehicles, as well as the latest innovations associated with PHEVs and supporting electricity infrastructure.

“With the California Air Resources Board now requiring automakers to produce for the state’s roads either 25,000 zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) by 2014 or about 7,500 ZEVs and 58,000 PHEVs – requirements with national implications – this is the right time for a gathering with a focus on plug-in technology that represents one of the most viable near-term ways to get to a greener future,” said Tom Turrentine, director of the Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicle Research Center at the University of California, Davis (one of the Plug-In 2008 event organizers).

The content-rich agenda for Plug-In 2008 includes three plenary sessions, a pre-conference battery workshop and 18 breakout sessions. In addition, Andy Grove, former Intel chairman and CEO, is providing a keynote address on the critical importance – and business opportunity and viability – of moving transportation from oil to electricity.

PHEVs, which can average the equivalent of 100 miles per gallon, operate on battery power for a clean, quiet ride, and then on liquid fuel for unlimited range. Their use of electricity from diverse domestic resources, including renewable energy, can play an important role in reducing U.S. dependence on foreign oil.

A comprehensive assessment of plug-in technology released in 2007 by the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI, another Plug-In 2008 event organizer) and the Natural Resources Defense Council included the following key findings:

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- Widespread adoption of PHEVs can reduce greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles by more than 450 million metric tons annually in 2050 – equivalent to removing 82.5 million passenger cars from the road.
- There is an abundant supply of electricity for transportation; a 60% U.S. market share for PHEVs would use 7% to 8% of grid-supplied electricity in 2050.
- PHEVs can improve nationwide air quality and reduce petroleum consumption by 3 million to 4 million barrels per day in 2050.

In addition, according to EPRI, with the national average cost of electricity at 8.5 cents per kilowatt-hour, a PHEV runs on an equivalent of roughly 75 cents per gallon of gasoline – a huge savings for consumers.

“Given the significant potential for PHEVs to expand the fuel options in our transportation sector and at the same time yield net benefits for the environment and consumers, the transportation and electric industries are moving forward with a concerted effort to advance PHEV technology,” said Mark Duvall, EPRI’s program manager for Electric Transportation. “Plug-In 2008 represents another very important step on the road to the commercial introduction of PHEVs.”

The Plug-In 2008 event organizers include the Electric Power Research Institute, Pacific Gas & Electric, San Diego Gas & Electric (a Sempra Energy utility), the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, Southern California Edison and the University of California, Davis Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicle Research Center.

Platinum sponsors include the California Energy Commission, the City of San Jose, Pacific Gas & Electric, San Diego Gas & Electric (a Sempra Energy utility), the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, Southern California Edison and Team San Jose. Additional sponsors include Novellus, the South Coast Air Quality Management District and Varian Semiconductor Equipment (gold level); and Avnet (bronze level).

For more information on Plug-In 2008, visit www.plugin2008.com.

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