

Opinion

LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS

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Easier ways for city to save fuel

Here's another comment regarding City Council's attempts to reduce the city's "carbon footprint" by setting the impossible goal of 100% use of renewable energy by 2050 that I criticized in my letter published April 13.

In Europe, where motor fuels have been expensive for many years, there are excellent methodologies for reducing wasted fuel, for instance, red traffic lights when there's no traffic to control. If there are dual controls at such an intersection, both traffic signal and stop sign, then three modes of traffic control may be implemented, based on either day and time or traffic intensity sensing:

Level 3: High traffic: Signals programmed as at present. Level 2: Low traffic. Signals default to blinking amber/blinking red. Level 3: Very Low Traffic. Lit signal goes out; traffic is controlled by yield or stop sign.

This system works well in Germany; it may also be in effect in other countries.

There's another change, "Blinking Stale Green," which I've seen used in Austria and Costa Rica. This method blinks the green light for about two seconds before the light changes from green to amber.

Implementing the first suggestion would reduce the time and fuel wasted waiting for the signal to change when traffic is light or very light. Implementing the second might reduce the "Las Cruces Speedway Effect," strongly accelerating vehicles on signal change we now see on a routine basis.

Finally, synchronizing the traffic signals would reduce wasted fuels.

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