

WAKEFIELD DAILY ITEM

FORUM

## Driving Wakefield forward

I want to thank the Wakefield Municipal Gas and Light Department (WMGLD) for their "Drive Electric, Wakefield" program. With the recent addition of a new driver to our family, we were in the market for another car when I spotted the utility's invitation to see their new electric vehicle (EV) and learn more about the incentive program.

Until then, I had assumed that our best option was to gamble on a used car. Yet, the significant WMGLD/Nissan rebate and free home charger, coupled with state and federal incentives, made purchasing a new

EV economically feasible. Layer on the elimination of gas and oil costs and the decision was easy. The process was painless, and we now own an all-electric Nissan Leaf.

Electric vehicles are not for everyone – the trip range is far less than a conventional car, it takes time to recharge and requires planning to find available charging stations. However, for those who mostly drive locally and/or have other vehicles to use for longer trips, it is a good option.

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I'm proud of Wakefield and WMGLD for raising the profile of electric vehicles, and for giving me a way to again demonstrate to my two school-age kids that there are environmentally-sound options to everyday issues. Having spent my career promoting renewable energy, I am keenly aware that electric vehicles alone will not solve all our environmental problems. Yet the program is an important step to a greener community.

As EV's become more popular, I hope to see Wakefield offer public charging stations. There are 6,200 electric vehicles in Massachusetts today, with the number expected to grow to 300,000 within the decade. Placing charging stations in our retail areas or near the Lake would be another wonderful way to attract people to all that Wakefield offers.

**Julie Smith-Galvin**