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Chad Muncy with his new 2013 Volt, which he leased for \$200 a month.

### 54.5 MPG Set in Stone by EPA Last Week

troit auto industry welcomed the EPA / DOT announcement last week that 54.5 mpg really would be the federal target for car / light truck mileage by 2025.

Sounds far away, but it's closer than Detroit thinks, perhaps.

The target figure has been kicked around for a couple of years, but last week the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Transportation effectively put the target figure into stone, so to say.

These new standards matter for the city of Detroit," said Simone Lightfoot, Climate Equity and Sustainability Manager at the Detroit Branch NAACP. "Not only are plants like Jefferson North adding back jobs to build new cleaner cars and trucks, but more fuel efficient vehicles mean less pollution, improved health for families and savings at the

"It's a great example of how federal public policy can directly improve the economic and environmental challenges facing our urban centers. It's a great example of how federal public policy can directly improve the economic and environmental challenges facing our urban centers."

Added Lisa Wozniak, Executive Director of the Michigan League of Conservative Voters, "This is a major step towards reducing the carbon pollution that causes climate change.

We're cutting U.S. oil imports by one-third and saving three million barrels of oil per day. So instead of sending money to the Mideast, we can invest in clean technology and Michigan jobs here in the Midwest.'

The new standards announced by the federal government, building on bi-partisan backing for improved fuel economy and reduced emissions, were crafted with support from 13 automakers, automotive suppliers, state and federal regulators, the UAW various environmental groups.

In preparation for them, automakers and suppliers have invested in technology needed to produce cleaner, more fuel-efficient vehicles. Overall, the U.S. auto industry has added 236,000 jobs since the industry hit its low point in June of 2009, the era that

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The De- both General Motors and Auburn Hills. Chrysler declared their corporate bankruptcies.

"Automakers are looking for solutions that provide better fuel economy and reduce emissions while maintaining performance," said Erika Nielsen, Director of Marketing at BorgWarner in

"That means new opportunities for our company because our turbochargers, variable cam timing, dual clutch transmission modules and other powertrain technologies can help provide cleaner vehicles while maintaining or improving performance."

# **Volt Plant Down this Month; GM Readies for New Impala**

by Gerald Scott

If Chad Muncy's reaction to his purchase of a 2013 Chevrolet . Volt is any indication, the plug-in hybrid from GM has a bright future after all.

That's because the Volt was in the news last week as GM announced it would be idling the Hamtramck Assembly Center for four weeks, from Sept. 17 - Oct. 15, ostensibly to draw down the inventory of Volts at dealerships while also re-tooling the plant to welcome the 2014 Impala.

But back to Muncy, who is a purchasing manager at Preferred Data Systems in Farmington Hills. Muncy was doing business with a client at the Chicago Office Plaza in Warren, same building as the Tech Center News editorial office, and we caught up with him there to discuss his purchase.

"I was spending more in gas per month than the (car note) payment," Muncy explained.

"My boss knew I was car-hunting so he put a newspaper flyer in front of me for the Volt. I don't usually look at flyers, but this one said the Volt price had dropped \$50 (prior to the end of the sales month).

"So I visited Serra Chevrolet, rate mind to the challenge.

the dealer at I-696 and Telegraph, and the Volts were actually going quick, so I said I'll take that one (black car) right there.'

All of which must be music to the ears of the bigwigs at the RenCen towers at General Motors. A Chevrolet spokesman noted that the Volt was on track to sell 2,500 units nationwide in August, its best sales month ever, even as 1,400 UAW workers at the Hamtramck plant face the pending four-week layoff idle.

When the plant returns to production in October, it will be assembling four vehicles simultaneously including the Chevrolet Volt / Opel Ampera, Chevrolet Malibu and Chevrolet Impala.

The GM Hamtramck plant, built in 1985 to manufacture large-car Cadillacs of that era, has completely remade itself as a Chevrolet plant, led by the flagship Volt.

Flagship perhaps not in sales, but definitely in image, as GM has noted a number of times since the corporate bankruptcy of 2009 that the Volt represents the kind of real-world, leadingedge, 21st century car engineering and design that the company is capable of generating when it puts its resources and its corpo-

## Chrysler Foresees 2013 Ram Pickup as a Hit at \$23,585

AUBURN HILLS - Chrysler has announced pricing for 2013 on the Ram 1500 truck and it is backing up the vehicle's value with plenty of statistics and information about what the truck is delivering to customers.

Well, Chrysler says, it is delivering best-in-class fuel economy of 18 mpg city and 25 mpg highway with a truckload of pioneering, fuel-saving systems including a more fuel-efficient and more powerful 3.6-liter V6 engine and first-in-segment technologies: eight-speed automatic transmission, stop-start system, thermal management system, pulse-width modulation and active aerodynamics, including grille shutters and air suspension.

Ram last week also confirmed pricing for the 2013 Ram 1500. Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Prices will average just over 1 1500 will be \$23,585, including livers best-in-class fuel efficiency,



Fred Diaz, President and CEO of the Ram Truck Brand and Chrysler de Mexico.

\$995 destination charge.

percent higher than 2012 prices. most capable, best-looking half-Starting price for the 2013 Ram ton pickup in the world and de-

new technology and new features Chrysler Group LLC. "The new 2013 Ram 1500 is the while upgrading the interior and exterior," said Fred Diaz, president and CEO of Ram Truck Brand and Chrysler de Mexico -

"We changed every area of the truck - from a newly designed

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Randy Visintainer, Ford Research and Advanced Engineering.

#### Ford Survey Says Drivers Want More Technology, Such as Blind Spot Aid, Self-Parking, Voice-Activated Calling

by Jim Stickford

Ford Motor Co. recently showed off the upcoming Ford Focus 2013, complete with driver-assisted technology the company says meets important consumer interests in driver safety.

At a special showing Aug. 28 in Ford's Dearborn Product Development Center, William Mann, senior vice president and managing director of the market research firm Penn Schoen Berland, said that in order to find out what consumers cared about when it came to driving technology, his firm - commissioned by Ford - surveyed 2,506 adults over the age of 18.

What the survey revealed was that drivers, when being candid about their driving habits, admitted to doing other activities, such as making phone calls or eating, while driving. Drivers also said they wanted technology that will help them be a safer

For example, Mann said, about three-quarters of those surveved admitted to eating while driving. About 55 percent admitted to speeding, 53 percent admitted to talking on a cell phone and 37 percent admitted to driving while probably being too tired to drive.

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