

Tech Center News

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Deadline: Thursday 5:00 p.m.
for the next edition of Monday

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Home Energy Savings Tips

Michigan State Extension is offering a four-part workshop titled, "Home Maintenance and Repair" on Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 8 p.m. starting on March 5. The class will be held in the Warren City Hall, across from the GM Tech Center on Van Dyke.

The workshop is free and open to the public. To register in advance, call 586-469-7614.

The first class is concerns the topic of home tightening, insulation and ventilation. Students will analyze use of energy through a whole house. They will find out how to save money by plugging leaks and proper use of insulation.

XTS Gaining Exposure by Filling Void in Livery Market

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"We didn't take out any options," Strosberg said. "It's not stripped, it has more features in it than most people expect when they think of a livery vehicle."

GM made the push to get livery companies to purchase the XTS last summer when the new model was first introduced. In addition to introducing the XTS to a wider public, having livery companies use the vehicle is introducing people to the technology that connects people to the information cloud.

"Even when people are in the back seat, they no longer have any downtime and have to be productive," Nally said. "The XTS keeps them connected."

With the new W20 Livery Package, Cadillac XTS-based limousines are now on par with showroom models. The package, which includes elements of the XTS Platinum Edition, is exclusively offered to livery compa-

nies through Cadillac's Professional Vehicles program.

"XTS represents a new approach to luxury, centered on advanced technology and design," said Don Butler, vice president of Cadillac marketing. "This same approach extends to Professional Vehicles, where we are bringing a new formula to the livery customer. Every experience in a Cadillac, front seat or rear seat, meets a higher standard for luxury, performance and technology."

Unlike many of the cars built for the livery and fleet industries in the past, the special XTS model is at the higher-end of the product range, including 19-inch wheels, exterior door handles with LED illumination, safety

technology – such as a rear vision camera – and a micro-fiber suede headliner included in the XTS Platinum Edition.

An available rear seat comfort package includes heated seats, window sun shades and a power inverter to charge mobile devices. Navigation, offered through Cadillac's CUE system for connectivity and control, is also available in the W20 Livery Package.

Carey International, the world's largest livery company, was one of the first companies to sign on, purchasing 150 new Cadillac XTS W20 Professional Services Sedans.

"Our customers wanted approachable luxury and enabling technology," said Gary Kessler,

president and CEO of Carey International. "We chose the XTS as the cornerstone of the Carey brand because it represented the perfect combination of power, luxury, technology and sophistication that our customers desire and demand today."

Carey conducted extensive research into 24 vehicles before choosing the XTS W20.

"In the end, the decision to go with the XTS was a no-brainer," Kessler said.

Cadillac's Professional Vehicles program includes a select number of coachbuilders authorized by Cadillac to convert vehicles for use in commercial or fleet duties according to a specific set of standards.

Defense Industry Contracts are Good Bet for Businesses

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Gapinski said the core competency of the Office of Small Business is to sustain the system. They are looking for services for hardware maintenance. TACOM, she said, it isn't just Warren. They have satellite offices all over the country.

"The biggest question I get is, 'How do I do business with the Defense Department?'" Gapinski said.

"I tell them it's my job to make the government process understandable for the small business owner.

So I do things like identify what small businesses can do and then work with 'large, prime' contractors on their flow-down options."

Gapinski said that when large defense contractors get work from the Defense Department, they have to make sure that a certain percentage of their subcontracted work comes from groups that fit socio-economic categories determined by Congress.

That includes small businesses owned by women, handicapped veterans and minorities.

"People often don't know that fact," Gapinski said. "They think they have to work with the government directly, and don't think about doing business with prime contractors. We will work with small businesses and the prime contracting office to make sure that federal content laws are implemented."

Gapinski said businesses can learn more about the bid process by working with groups like PTAC and by working with the Office of Small Business Programs.

NAM's CEO Calls for Balancing Regulations with Costs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Timmons called for balancing the need for regulation with justifying the costs of such regulations to manufacturers. His economic prescription also cites the need for a comprehensive plan for economic growth, common-sense tort reform, and a national tax climate that promotes manufacturing. Timmons said it's 20 percent more expensive to manufacture products in the U.S. compared with competing locations – and that's excluding the cost of labor.

Timmons told the DEC that manufacturers are ready to power the economy, but only with the right policies in place to transform the sluggish recovery into an economic resurgence, since manufacturing has the highest multiplier effect of any sector of the economy.

"Unemployment is high. The global economy remains shaky," he said. "Too many Americans no longer believe that our country's best days are ahead of us. Those

naysayers are wrong – assuming we get our policies right."

DEC member Patrick Michel, vice president of Dassault Systemes for the Michigan area, gave his thoughts on Timmons' speech in an interview. Dassault Systemes is a global producer of 3-D design software and digital mockups based in France, with U.S. headquarters in Waltham, Mass.

"As someone who works with manufacturing companies each day, it was good to be reminded of what a powerful impact manufacturing can have on the economy," Michel said. "We agree with Timmons' perspective that manufacturers need to be prepared for the next growth wave to compete globally."

Technology is a key component of that preparedness and we are helping our clients innovate through the use of 3D technologies in manufacturing."

Michel particularly agreed with Timmons' call for policies to make U.S. manufacturers the most innovative.

"From Dassault Systemes' perspective, we believe history has shown the role innovation plays in powering job creation and building a strong economy," he said. "Countries that put a strong focus on technology and innovation have typically led the world in offering high wages that help improve their overall standard of living."

Timmons said U.S. manufacturers are hampered by a lack of people with strong STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) skills. Michel said it's a complex problem going beyond the need to improve STEM education.

"Technological innovation helps to improve the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturing and our economic future is dependent on remaining a leader in science and technology," Michel said. "Connecting with youth early on is key to getting them into STEM education and careers."

Information on the National Association of Manufacturers can be viewed at www.nam.org.

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