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Orion Plant paint employees wear special lint-free suits for quality.

GM Orion Plant's Paint Shop Features 'Blue Suit Crew'

by Jim Stickford

It's not easy achieving perfection, but that hasn't stopped GM from installing a new vehicle paint system at its Orion Assembly plant in Lake Orion.

Kevin Nadrowski, plant communications manager for GM's southeast region including Orion Assembly, said painting a new vehicle is not just part of the manufacturing process – "it is an intricate chemical operation requiring constant scientific monitoring.

"Trained experts, members of General Motors' 'Blue Suit Crew,' follow elaborate precautions to ensure that final vehicle paint finishes are pristine."

The Blue Suit Crew puts on blue Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) lint-free suits and hats that are required at all times in the paint facility – hence the name, "Blue Suit Crew." These clothes are to be worn only in the paint facility. The suits are part of GM's commitment to

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1970 Charger R/T Picked as 'Top Eliminator'

Mopar's 2013 "Top Eliminator" program has chosen New Jersey native Bill Mann's 1970 Charger R/T as a winner from the Carlisle Chrysler Nationals held in Carlisle, Pa., in July.

The long-running customized and performance vehicle program highlights passionate and dedicated Mopar enthusiasts who "display unmatched skill in modifying or preserving a classic or modern-day Mopar vehicle," said Tricia Hecker, head of Mopar Marketing.

Candidates were judged by a panel of Mopar representatives on a number of criteria, including Mopar content, restoration and customization efforts, overall appearance and additional benchmarks.

In recognition for being named a Mopar "Top Eliminator," Mann's winning entry, a 1970 Charger R/T with a Plum Crazy exterior and white interior, was showcased in the Mopar display area at the Woodward Dream Cruise on Aug. 17.

While he was inspired as a nine-year-old by watching the "General Lee" Dodge Charger fly through the air each week on television, it was a father-son restoration project with a '68 as a teenager in the mid-1980s that cemented Mann's bug for Chargers.

In late 1989, he found the car

he was looking for in Spokane, Wash.

The initial restoration took five years to complete and then, following an accident that damaged the vehicle, a second restoration was finished in late 1998. Committed to keeping the car as original as possible, Mann rebuilt as many parts as he could.

He swapped notes with friends and fellow Mopar club members and spent time going to swap meets to find parts such as new old-stock fenders and quarter panels to finish the car. Since then, the Plum Crazy '70 Charger R/T was Original Equipment (OE) Certified at the Chrysler Nation-

als in 2000, and served as his wedding car in 2002.

Over the years, Mann has taken the Charger to car shows and brought it to this year's Carlisle show so he could meet other members of the 1970 Dodge Charger Registry Club, Hecker said.

"Totally shocked," is how Mann says winning this year's Top Eliminator honors left him.

"When Mopar tells you that your car is among the best, there's not much else to say," Mann said.

He said the equipment on his

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Bill Mann and his 1970 Dodge Charger R/T

TRW Buckles Down to Improve Seat Belts

To help remove some seat belt slack before a collision, TRW has designed a new anchor seat belt pretensioner in a rotary configuration.

The APR1, as it's known, is designed to deliver pretensioning forces of more than 3 kN, which can help to remove some seat belt slack within milliseconds of a crash being detected.

The APR1 features a lighter-weight design and more compact packaging resulting in an easy integration for vehicle manufacturer interiors.

Norbert Kagerer, vice president, Occupant Safety Systems Engineering, TRW Automotive

Holdings Corp. of Livonia, said, "The APR1 design offers vehicle manufacturers a number of options and advantages compared with existing systems.

"We are seeing strong interest globally for APR1 due to its packaging, weight and performance attributes.

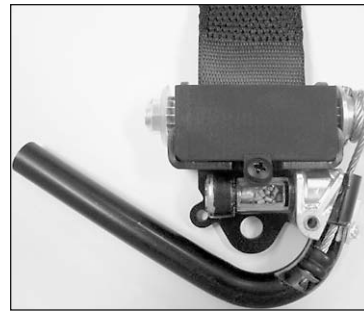
"The rotary design helps deliver enhanced pretensioning functionality and TRW is uniquely positioned to combine this technology with other occupant safety and active safety technologies to sense a crash and react to the unique characteristics of the crash."

There is no linkage element nec-

essary in the new system and only the normal seat belt webbing will be visible in the vehicle cabin.

When combined with TRW's full spectrum of occupant protection seat belt and airbag options, the APR1 helps form the basis of advanced adaptive occupant technologies designed to help manage occupant energy in an unavoidable crash scenario, a spokesman said.

For example, it can be combined with TRW's Active Control Retractor system or Active Buckle lifter to help remove some seatbelt slack before a crash occurs if a potential crash is detected by active vehicle sensors.



Rotary pretensioner

TRW is making this move to further strengthen its product portfolio, especially for challenging packaging situations, a spokesman said.

The APR1 will launch on several European vehicle platforms in 2015.

GM Foundation Contributes to MLK Memorial

The General Motors Foundation has donated \$50,000 to the National Park Foundation to help fund the 50th anniversary commemoration of the historic 1963 March on Washington and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech.

The Foundation grant, said Marie Mainville, manager of GM Foundation Corporate Communications, helped bring the events of Aug. 28 on the National Mall to people across the nation and around the world.

A mass march along the historic Aug. 28, 1963, route ended at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. President Obama last week addressed the nation from the very spot where Dr. King delivered his speech 50 years ago during the "Let Freedom Ring" ceremony.

About 100,000 people attended this year's event.

"The GM Foundation believes that Dr. King's dream of equality and peace is just as powerful and resonate a half-century later," said GM Foundation President Vivian Pickard.

"We proudly support these events in the hopes that future generations will continue to be inspired by Dr. King's vision and message."

General Motors and the GM Foundation have been longtime supporters of Dr. King's vision of diversity and inclusion through support of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, including contributions of more than \$10 million to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Foundation since fundraising for the monument began in 2006.

2014 Cadillac CTS Rides 'The Ring' in Germany – and Passes

Cadillac validated its all-new 2014 CTS midsize luxury sedan and power-packed CTS Vsport at the world's most demanding test track – Germany's Nürburgring – and recorded lap times to enhance the nameplate's reputation as a driver's car.

Notably, the 2014 CTS Vsport, featuring Cadillac's first Twin-Turbo engine and eight-speed transmission, recorded a lap time of 8:14.10, almost six seconds faster than the first-generation CTS-V recorded 10 years ago with a larger V8 engine.

"It's been about 10 years since Cadillac first went," said Cadillac spokesman Brian Corbett. "Since then, we've been going there for various vehicles.

"That's because the Nürburgring is the most challenging course in the world."

Corbett said Cadillac engineers learned a lot about the vehicle's performance, handling, cornering and ride by testing it at Nür-

burgring, also popularly called, "The Ring."

"It's the longest course in the world and when you're doing laps, you're really pushing the car as far as it can go, doing high performance driving that long," Corbett said.

"Going to the track really validated what we expected of the CTS. One of Cadillac's core missions is to deliver world performance. You need to stand out from the crowd in both design and performance."

Corbett said Cadillac wants the CTS to be fun to drive and be a car that really engages the customer.

"That's what all of our cars need to be, but as far as the track goes, it shows how far you can push the car," Corbett said. "It's not like our customers can take corners at high speeds, but it's nice to know our cars can do that in a sophisticated manner."

The Nürburgring validation

certified that all CTS suspension packages are capable of handling the extreme conditions and unlimited speeds of Autobahn driving, Corbett said. CTS development included Autobahn and track calibrations of the steering

system, shock absorbers, chassis controls and powertrain cooling.

"The Nürburgring's extreme conditions allow us to push cars to the limits of stability, steering,

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2014 Cadillac CTS speeds around the track at Nürburgring.

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