

2014 Chevy Silverado Aims for Toughness, Strength

Trucks are supposed to be tough and more than half of light-duty pickup trucks on the road are now 11 years or older.

To improve the toughness image, Chevy engineers have designed the 2014 Silverado to be the most corrosion-resistant Chevrolet truck ever, according to a GM press release.

"Silverado's corrosion protection measures provide superior defense against elements in the environment, whether driving through farm fields, on construction gravel, or down a snow-covered highway," said Mark Yergin, Engineering Group manager, General Motors Corrosion Engineering and Labs.

"The new Silverado is our strongest truck yet, affording us the confidence that the truck will continue to meet customers' needs throughout its life."

The 2014 Silverado starts with zinc-coated (galvanized) steel for the roof and all body panels except the hood, which is made of an aluminum alloy that reduces weight and provides corrosion resistance, Yergin said. At every step of the design and manufacture of the new Silverado, say Chevy officials, materials and production processes were selected to help minimize deterioration over time.



A 2014 Chevy Silverado pickup goes through the paces of hem flange sealing on doors, hood and underbody.

Additional 2014 improvements over previous models, according to Chevy officials, include:

- All-new body structures designed to minimize the potential for corrosion;
- Improved hem flange sealing on the doors and hood, and additional underbody flange sealing that help keep the joints of the truck dry, discouraging deterioration that might occur from

moisture;

- Extensive and improved chassis corrosion protection that enhances the truck's appearance and lengthens the life of underbody components;
- Anti-chip protection on the lower body side for extra protection from stones or gravel.

The effectiveness of these changes was borne out during extensive proving ground testing at

exposure levels higher than most drivers ever experience, Yergin said. The months of accelerated testing these trucks undergo is equivalent to more than 10 years on the road, he added.

Post-test evaluations of the trucks, including the search for and elimination of corrosion even on areas of parts customers never see, helps ensure the overall vehicle performance, Yergin said.

There's No Dirt on Ford Trucks – Until They Leave the Plant

Here's the dirt on Ford's new paint technology: There isn't any.

That's what Ford said in a recent public announcement.

The new Ford F-Series models are the latest vehicles to benefit from the company's industry-first dirt detection technology.

The system uses high-resolution cameras and reflected light to digitally identify surface imperfections finer than a grain of salt in final vehicle assembly, and to cue operators where to polish and buff out imperfections.

By using dirt detection technology, Ford improved paint quality and reduced customer complaints of vehicle surface finish by 82 percent within one year, as measured by customer warranty data for F-Series models produced at the company's Dearborn Truck Plant.

"This system ensures better paint jobs and surface finishes for Ford customers around the world," said Tom Dougan, project manager, Global Paint Applications at Ford.

In the past, Dougan said, paint and surface inspections were based on human-eye examination.

The 3D imaging system applies varying degrees and angles of

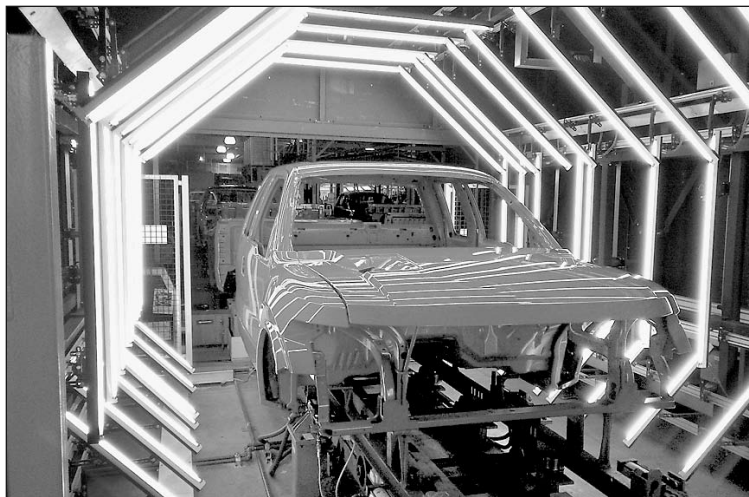
light while scoping the paint surface of vehicle bodies to identify dirt in paint and other irregular paint conditions, he said. High-resolution images – 3,150 images are captured in 15 seconds for every vehicle made – are stitched together for a full 3D image that is digitally compared with a perfect computer model.

Dirt particles in paint are difficult to manage with conventional quality control methods, Dougan said. Minute particles can enter a shop floor from multiple environmental sources, machinery or workers, which makes paint quality one of the toughest variables to control in production.

Along with Dearborn Truck Plant, the automated inspection system is now being used in the United States at Ford's Kentucky Truck Plant.

"This is one of the most exciting integrations of optical science and digital technology in the automotive industry," said Dougan. "By combining innovations in vision technology, processing speed and software, Ford continues to invent new technologies that give our customers better paint quality and surpass competitor offerings."

Globally, dirt detection tech-



Dirt detection technology improves Ford's F-Series paint quality.

nology is used at three Ford assembly plants:

- Valencia Assembly Plant, Valencia, Spain – Ford C-MAX (Grand C-MAX and compact models);
- Dearborn Truck Plant, Dearborn, Mich. – Ford F-Series;
- Kentucky Truck Plant, Louisville, Ky. – Ford Expedition, Ford Super Duty.

The technology launches later this year at these plants:

- Louisville Assembly Plant, Louisville, Ky. – Ford Escape;

- Chicago Assembly Plant, Chicago – Ford Taurus, Ford Police Interceptor, Ford Explorer;
- Oakville Assembly, Oakville, Ontario, Canada – Ford Edge, Ford Flex.

In 2014, Ford will launch dirt detection technology at the following plants:

- Flat Rock Assembly Plant, Flat Rock, Mich. – Ford Mustang, Ford Fusion;
- Kansas City Assembly Plant, Claycomo, Mo. – Ford F-Series.

52,000 Owners Can't Be Wrong, Says Chrysler, as Ram Truck Brand Named 'Most Ideal Popular' by AutoPacific

The Ram Truck brand has been named the "Most Ideal Popular Brand" in AutoPacific's 2013 Ideal Vehicle Awards, based on owners' ratings of their 2013 cars and trucks.

Additionally, Chrysler reported, two of the company's vehicles – the 2013 Jeep Grand Cherokee and 2013 Chrysler Town & Country – were named "Most Ideal Mid-size SUV" and "Most Ideal Minivan" in their respective classes. Jeep Grand Cherokee has been named "Most Ideal Mid-size SUV" in the AutoPacific competition three years in a row.

"For any business, positive recognition from customers is the ultimate compliment and we take their input very seriously," said Reid Bigland, Chrysler Group's head of U.S. Sales.

"We're proud to say that Chrysler Group is delivering the most of what consumers are looking for."

"The Ideal Vehicle Awards," said Dan Hall, vice president of AutoPacific, "show that marketers, product planners, researchers and engineers have developed and launched a vehicle executed best for their target market."

The Ideal Vehicle Awards are based on responses to AutoPacific's New Vehicle Satisfaction Survey. AutoPacific asked owners to indicate a desire to change their vehicle in 15 different categories, ranging from power and acceleration to safety features and storage, after having owned and driven their vehicle for 90 days.

Based on a survey of more than 52,000 new car and light truck owners, vehicles with the least amount of desired changes are recognized as ideal.

Head of Ram Truck Media Relations David Eishoff said the Ram Truck brand continues to establish its own identity and clearly



2013 Ram 1500

defines its customer since its launch as the newest Chrysler vehicle brand.

Creating a stand-alone brand for Ram trucks has allowed the brand to concentrate on how core customers use their trucks and what new features they'd like to see, Eishoff said.

Whether focusing on a family that uses its half-ton truck day in and day out, a hard-working Ram Heavy Duty owner, or a business that depends on its commercial

vehicles every day, Ram has the truck market covered, said Eishoff.

He said the 2013 Chrysler Town & Country is the most awarded minivan, with the highest owner loyalty in the segment.

He added that the 2013 Chrysler Town & Country is an Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) Top Safety Pick and offers more than 40 available safety, security and technology features.

GM Tech Center's JDRF Walk Could Raise Nearly \$1M

by Jim Stickford

Walkers are expected to raise \$1.8 million in two upcoming events in Southeast Michigan.

Both walks – one at the GM Tech Center in Warren and one in the Hudson Mills Metropark near Ann Arbor – are scheduled for Sept. 29.

In each case, the walk is being held to raise funds for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

The JDRF Walk to Cure Diabetes at the Tech Center will begin at 9:30 a.m.

Michael Craig, development manager for JDRF Metro Detroit, Southeast Michigan and Northwest Ohio Chapter, said the organization has held a walk at the Tech Center for the past 31 years.

"GM has been great to us," Craig said. "Not only by providing a venue in the form of the Tech Center but through financial support."

"They have been just tremendous. In past years, they've had more than 200 people (from GM) participate in the walk. They've been great about recruiting people to work at the event, getting employees to donate."

"Their efforts to promote the walk and to help us in the fundraising is greatly appreciated."

Craig estimates more than 7,500 Southeast Michigan walkers will participate this year to help fund research for prevention, treatment and/or a cure for type 1 diabetes and its complications.

"Each day, people with type 1 diabetes must overcome the constant challenges of the disease, monitoring blood sugar levels and taking the proper dosages of insulin," said Kate Durak, executive director for the JDRF Metro Detroit, Southeast Michigan and Northwest Ohio Chapter.

"Just as they must be committed to their health, we are devoted to funding the research that could offer them better treatments or develop a cure. The Walk to Cure Diabetes is an important way we support one another emotionally and financially."

Type 1 diabetes is commonly known as juvenile diabetes.

Craig said the Warren walk alone is expected to raise about \$955,000.

Based on last year's figures, organizers expect about 6,000 people to participate in the Warren walk.

Walkers can register at walk.jdrf.org. There is no registration fee to participate, but participants are encouraged to raise pledges to support research vital to finding a cure for T1D.

Walkers raising \$100 or more will receive a JDRF Walk T-shirt the day of the event.

Walkers raising \$200 or more are eligible for prizes ranging from JDRF-branded merchandise to electronics, toys and housewares.

For this year's walks, Terry Conley, partner at Grant Thornton LLP, serves as the Southeast Michigan Chair.

Club GM is also lending a hand with the event by selling raffle tickets for \$5 apiece. The raffle's grand prize is \$1,000.

The winner will be selected at the Tech Center around 11 a.m. on Sept. 29. It will not be necessary to be present at the drawing to win.

Tickets will be sold at the club's VEC store at the Tech Center until Sept. 20.

For more information on the raffle, contact Katie Murphy at 586-441-8670.