

2018 Equinox's New Design is 'Attractive, Aero-Efficient'

With more than 2.7 million sold last year, compact SUVs are the largest vehicle segment in the U.S., and customers say they want passenger and cargo space that fits their lifestyle without compromising on fuel efficiency.

That was the task for the Design and Aerodynamic teams working on the shape of the new 2018 Equinox: to create an all-new compact SUV that is a perfect balance of style, function and efficiency, said Jeff Perkins, Equinox design manager.

"Working closely with the aerodynamics team, we were able to craft a final design that is the ultimate win-win scenario," said Perkins.

"Together, we reached the aerodynamic goals intended to give the new Equinox an efficiency-enhancing edge on the highway with the sculpted look and cargo space we set out to achieve."

The 2018 Equinox offers an EPA-estimated 32 mpg on the highway (FWD models).

The teams took great care, said Perkins, in creating a refined new vehicle shape that maintains the key proportions of a small crossover/SUV.

In addition to delivering the utility and functionality customers look for in the segment, he said, the Equinox's expressive exterior has a lean, sculpted

form sporting Chevrolet's signature design cues.

"Aerodynamic performance is a big contributor to fuel economy, but the box-like shapes of crossovers and SUVs are not conducive to aero efficiency," said Nick Lico, Global Aerodynamics development lead.

"Working with Design, we were able to craft an athletic shape that is both attractive and segment-leading in aero efficiency."

The new Equinox's overall length was reduced by 4.7 inches to further right-size the vehicle for customers, making it easier to park and maneuver. Despite the smaller exterior dimensions, interior volume increased by 3.5 cubic feet. The reduced length, however, posed another challenge to aero efficiency, because it is tougher to push a shorter



Perkins shows off the latest Equinox design, where sleekness and aerodynamics were the goals.

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President Trump to Look at Changing Old Emissions Rules

DETROIT (AP) – President Donald Trump's decision to re-examine Obama-era rules that govern automobile gas mileage could be the first round of a potentially bruising political fight: revoking the ability of California and other Democratic-leaning states to set their own, tougher car-emission standards.

Environmental groups are preparing for the clash, which began even before Trump acted and is likely to be settled by the courts.

California's unique status

dates to 1970, in the early days of the Clean Air Act. Because of the state's smoggy skies, Congress gave California a "waiver," allowing it to set stricter pollution standards than the rest of the nation. The California standard is now used by at least a dozen – mostly Northeastern – states, including New York and Massachusetts.

The Trump administration has said it wants one uniform fuel mileage requirement for automakers across the U.S. Environmental groups and California offi-

cials fear that the administration will try to revoke the waiver, and they're taking action to fight it in court.

California Gov. Jerry Brown denounced the Trump administration's move, telling Environmental Protection Agency chief Scott Pruitt in a letter March 15 it was a "gift to polluters."

Brown warned automakers in another letter last week that his state would take the "necessary steps" to preserve its current emissions standards.

Buttressing Brown's threats,

California filed a motion last week to intervene in a new lawsuit brought by auto manufacturers against the EPA, a move immediately joined by New York State. The actions will allow the two states to defend the tougher emissions standards in court.

"President Trump's action represents a dramatic wrong turn in our nation's efforts to fight air pollution from passenger cars and trucks and protect the health of our children, seniors

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Dr. James O. Sawyer IV

MCC's Board Approves New School Leader

The Macomb Community College Board of Trustees has finalized the appointment of James O. Sawyer IV, Ed.D., as the college's next president, approving an employment contract at its meeting on March 14.

The three-year contract provides for an annual salary of \$225,000 and yearly cost-of-living increases of at least one percent. Sawyer will assume the presidency on July 1, 2017, said MCC spokeswoman Jeanne Nicol.

"As Macomb's next president, Dr. Sawyer will not only ensure a seamless, positive transition for the college, but he also possesses the dual strengths of being an experienced educator with a comprehensive grounding in business and industry," said Jennifer Haase, chair, Macomb Community College Board of Trustees.

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Ed Rinke Among Chevy Dealers Donating to Capuchins

Rinke Chevrolet joined with other members of the Metro Detroit Chevrolet Dealers Association to donate a couple of trucks' worth of items to the Capuchin Soup Kitchen's Services Center as part of the association's "Truckloads for Hope" fundraising effort.

"Every year, the association does something for charity," said Ken Swieczkowski, sales associate at Ed Rinke Chevrolet in Center Line. "This year, we chose the Capuchin Soup Kitchen's Services Center to help. So, during February, we solicited donations from staff and customers to raise money for the Capuchins. We then used the money to purchase items from a list that will help



Ken Swieczkowski with Rinke-raised goods for the Capuchins.

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Opel, formerly owned by GM, will now be controlled by PSA Group.

GM's Sale of Opel, Vauxhall Seen as Strong Effort to Focus on Profits

by ANGELA CHARLTON and TOM KRISHER
Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) – By shedding the bulk of its European operations, General Motors is getting rid of a perennial money drain and gaining essential cash that it can use to reward shareholders and invest in future technology such as electric cars and ride-sharing.

The Detroit automaker also indicated that there's a possibility it may pull out of more unprofitable markets in the future.

GM on March 6 sold its European Opel and Vauxhall brands to French carmaker PSA Group for roughly \$2.33 billion, retreating from the world's third-largest auto market after almost two decades of futile efforts to make money. The brands have lost \$20 billion in the fiercely competitive region since last making a full-year profit in 1999.

"I think they're ready to cut their losses and move on," said

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General Motors Investing Big, Producing Jobs in Michigan

General Motors will be adding or retaining approximately 900 jobs across three Michigan facilities during the next 12 months. The 900 jobs are in addition to the 7,000 jobs and \$1 billion in U.S. investments GM announced earlier this year.

GM on March 15 outlined a series of programs the company is supporting to promote the overall development of skills required for future job growth in Michigan and the U.S.

As a result of working closely with the UAW to grow the business, the company, GM spokesman Pat Morrissey said, has identified the following job opportunities:

- **Romulus Powertrain Plant:** Approximately 220 new jobs to increase production of the 10-speed automatic transmission for use in multiple GM products,

MCC's Board Approves New School Leader

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"In addition, Dr. Sawyer's work in spearheading the college's cultural shift from student access to student success will be a valuable aspect of his institutional leadership."

The appointment of Sawyer as Macomb's sixth president is the culmination of a national search initiated in September 2016 to find a replacement for retiring president James Jacobs, Nicol said.

Sawyer was one of four finalists for the position.

Sawyer has 14 years of experience at Macomb, previously serving as vice provost for Career Programs and dean of Engineering and Advanced Technology, as well as 17 years of business experience in leadership positions in engineering, quality and operations prior to joining the college.

Sawyer earned a bachelor of science in mechanical engineering from Lawrence Technological University, and master's in administration and doctorate in educational leadership from Central Michigan University.

More detailed biographical information is available at www.macomb.edu/presidential-search.

"I appreciate the support and confidence of the college's board of trustees, and I am humbled to be following in the footsteps of Dr. Jacobs," said Sawyer.

"I look forward to continuing to emphasize student success, working with Macomb's outstanding faculty and staff in developing meaningful resources and support in helping students overcome barriers that sometimes interfere with their goals, whether that be earning a credential that provides direct entry to the workforce, working toward an advanced degree, mastering a new skill or learning for personal satisfaction."

including the current 2017 Chevrolet Camaro ZL1.

- **Flint Assembly Plant:** About 180 retained jobs by redeploying team members from Lansing Delta Township to support production of the Chevrolet Silverado HD and GMC Sierra HD pickup trucks.

- **Lansing Delta Township:** Approximately 500 retained jobs to support production of the new Chevrolet Traverse and Buick Enclave in the first quarter of 2018.

"The job commitments announced today demonstrate the confidence we have in our products, our people and an overall positive outlook for the auto industry and the U.S. economy," said GM CEO Mary Barra.

As previously announced, Morrissey said the Lansing Delta Township Plant will be adjusting production plans this spring as the plant transitions from building three models – the Chevrolet Traverse, Buick Enclave and GMC Acadia (new GMC Acadia now built in Spring Hill, Tenn.) – to two models, the new Chevrolet Traverse and Buick Enclave. During this transition, the plant will not operate a third shift.

When the plant has fully launched the new crossovers by early 2018, GM will bring back approximately 500 jobs to give the company flexibility to meet market demand for the new crossovers, Morrissey said. Since 2009, GM, along with the UAW, announced investment commitments in Michigan of nearly \$10 billion. GM also outlined its support for several initiatives aimed at promoting the development of engineering and technical skills required for future job growth in Michigan and the U.S.:

- **FIRST Robotics:** It inspires and recognizes science and technology education.

- **Take 2:** An internship program for professionals with technical backgrounds who took a career break of two or more years and are interested in returning to the workforce.

- **Girls Who Code:** A partnership to inspire and empower thousands of U.S. middle and high school girls to become future leaders in technology and engineering fields.

- **SAE International's A World in Motion (AWIM):** A teacher-administered, industry volunteer-

assisted program that brings STEM education to life in K-12 classrooms.

- **Detroit Area Pre-College Engineering Program (DAPCEP):** Program to encourage and prepare students across southeast Michigan for the technical jobs of the future.

- **TechForce:** Partnership with Arizona Science Center and Phoenix public schools providing middle and high school students with hands-on experiences that encourage both

STEM and career and technical education.

- **Student Corps:** An internship program in underserved Michigan communities partnering high school students with GM retirees and college students on job training and life skills development.

"With the rapid pace of change in our industry, it's very important the U.S., and Michigan, are able to attract the best technical talent in the world for our most critical jobs and careers," said Barra.



Detroit area Chevy dealers recently donated truckloads of items to the Capuchin Soup Kitchen's Services Center.

Ed Rinke Among Dealers Aiding Capuchins

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people stay clean and stay warm."

Swieczkowski said it was an honor to go to stores and purchase the goods. The dealership had raised enough money to fill two pickup trucks with items from the Capuchin list.

"When I say the trucks were full, I mean they were full," Swieczkowski said. "We filled the beds and we filled the back of the

truck cabs that transported the goods. And these cabs still had to carry the driver and his assistant that helped carry the items out of the truck."

Credit for the size of the dealership's donation goes to its employees and customers, as well as the owner Edgar Rinke.

"Mr. Rinke and the staff were very generous," Swieczkowski said. "And we have great customers who were also willing to donate their money."

After dealership employees loaded up the two trucks, they took them to the Capuchin warehouse at the corner of Medbury and Mount Elliott in Detroit on March 3.

"Getting involved and helping out felt great," Swieczkowski said.

"Every year, we do something like this as well as donate to 'Toys for Tots.' We were glad to help out the Capuchins this year."

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Controlled upper, lower grille shutters improve Equinox aerodynamics.

Commission Approves Bond

The Macomb County Board of Commissioners on March 16 unanimously voted to approve a plan that would allow the Macomb Interceptor Drain District (MIDD) to float up to \$240 million worth of bonds.

The funds raised from the bond sale would go toward repairing the Fraser sewer collapse, said commission spokesman Michael O'Meara, as well as refinancing \$90 million worth of bonds floated in 2010.

"By using some of the money from this bond issue to refinance the 2010 bond issue, the county can save a couple of million dollars," O'Meara said.

The approval process began on March 15, O'Meara said, when the Macomb County Board of Commissioners Infrastructure and Economic Development Committee voted 10-1 to send the bond proposal to the board's

Finance Committee, which met on March 16.

O'Meara said the Finance Committee unanimously voted to send the proposal to the Board of Commissioners as a whole, and sent the proposal the same day to the Board of Commissioners.

"Under this plan, \$90 million would go to the 2010 bond issue and the remaining \$150 raised is to be allocated to the MIDD in two phases," O'Meara said.

"First, approximately \$75 million for the immediate fix of the 15 Mile collapse.

"And, second, an option for up to approximately \$75 million for lining repair of the remaining portion of the interceptor.

"A \$1.5 million grant is currently being used to fund an inspection of the rest of the interceptor to determine additional needs."

How to Be a Certified Storm Watcher

Macomb County Emergency Management has partnered with MacRay Harbor Marina of Harrison Township to bring the National Weather Service to Macomb County for two SKYWARN Spotter Training opportunities in 2017, said county spokesman Peter Locke.

SKYWARN storm spotters are part of the ranks of citizens who form the nation's first line of defense against severe weather,

Locke said.

The National Weather Service encourages anyone with an interest in public service and who has access to a HAM radio to join the SKYWARN program.

Locke said the first course will be held at MacRay Harbor Marina on Thursday, March 30, at 7:30 p.m. There is no cost.

To register and learn more about the program, call 586-469-1900, ext. 434.

Equinox Termed 'Attractive, Aero-Efficient'

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shape cleanly through the air.

More than 500 hours in GM's full-scale wind tunnel produced an exterior that not only maintains the essence of the intended design, but reduces wind resistance by 10 percent over the previous model.

New, electronically controlled upper and lower grille shutters account for the greater aero performance. They close in certain conditions on the highway, when engine cooling needs are reduced, pushing more air around the vehicle to reduce drag.

Additional details include:

- The larger rear spoiler was designed to help reduce turbulence at the rear of the vehicle for less wind resistance.

- The rear corner incorporates a series of cleverly incorporated "air trips," as the designers call them, for optimal air separation at the edges of the taillamps and corners at the D-pillars.

- New tire deflectors help achieve the same aerodynamic advantage as a traditional air dam, but without compromising the Equinox's sculpted design.

- Underbody panels on FWD models improve airflow beneath the vehicle.

All this attention to detail is important, Perkins said, because the compact SUV market is exploding in popularity.

"In the past, we'd take the design cues from larger SUVs and use them in the design of com-

pact SUVs," Perkins said. "But now customers want compact SUVs that don't have that trucky look. They want something that is sleek and modern, while at the same time has the cargo space they want."

The new 2018 Equinox, said Perkins, is a fresh and modern compact SUV, featuring an expressive design, increased cargo space, the latest connectivity, expanded roster of available safety features and all-new range of turbocharged engines – including the segment's first turbo-diesel.

Cargo area has increased, he said, with new storage features such as a large, hidden under-floor storage space and a flat cargo floor that makes loading and unloading easier.

Perkins said the biggest surprise in designing the new Equinox was how effective it was changing small details of design.

"We found a number of small trips that were effective in improving aerodynamics," Perkins said.

"Take the front fenders as an example. Look at how they are shaped. They are smooth and fluid."

"It's important, when designing a vehicle, that the air on the side stay attached. The challenge is that aerodynamics dictate a flat surface to do that but we want a shape that is sharp-looking and aerodynamic."

"Design is where art and science intersect."

Perkins said Computer Aided

Design (CAD) helps smooth out the design process by making the process quicker. But once a design has been completed in the computer, they still create full-sized clay sculptures.

"You have to see a design in real space," Perkins said. "Sometimes you have a design that looks great on the computer screen, but when you see it realized in clay, it just looks off."

"When that happens, we make adjustments to the clay model, scan the adjusted version and send those dimensions back to the computer for study."

Purposeful technologies are designed to help keep passengers safe, comfortable and connected.

Teen Driver is also offered, along with new safety features including Safety Alert Seat, Surround Vision, Forward Collision Alert with Following Distance Indicator and more.

Perkins said they do a lot of consumer research when coming up with new designs. One thing he heard from people about the new Equinox was that it looks new and modern and sleek.

"That's what we were going for," Perkins said. "We want people to look at the new design and see that it's new and fresh."

Perkins said now that the 2018 Equinox is completed, he's working on the next iteration of the vehicle.

The 2018 Equinox is on sale now. It's assembled in GM's Ingersoll, Ont., CAMI facility.

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Trump’s Proposed New Mileage, Emissions Rules Meeting Resistance

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and all communities,” said New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman.

Trump took the first step toward a legal showdown on March 15 in Michigan when he announced that the government will re-examine fuel economy requirements for 2022-2025. The rules were affirmed in the waning days of the Obama administration as part of a broader effort to control greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming.

Although the Trump administration says it hasn’t decided whether to weaken the requirements, Trump has promised the CEOs of major car companies that he’ll reduce “unnecessary regulations.” His EPA chief, Pruitt, has said he doesn’t believe carbon dioxide is a primary contributor to global warming, putting him at odds with Obama’s EPA and mainstream climate science.

“These standards are costly for automakers and the American people,” Pruitt said March 15. He promised a “thorough review” that will “help ensure this national program is good for consumers and good for the environment.”

Environmental groups predict

Trump will weaken the standards, which now require the fleet of new cars and trucks to average 36 miles per gallon in real-world driving conditions by 2025, about 10 mpg higher than the current standard. The auto industry is concerned that the standards will be hard to meet because people are buying more trucks and SUVs and shunning fuel-efficient cars.

The Trump administration downplayed any potential fight, saying officials have more than a year to resolve differences. A decision is not due until April 2018.

Currently, California and federal standards are mostly the same. But if Trump relaxes the standards, California and the other states likely would keep the 36 mpg rule in place, potentially creating two standards. Since about 40 percent of the nation’s vehicles are in states that follow California rules, automakers probably would conform to them rather than build two different vehicles for the U.S. market.

That means California would end up setting national policy. That’s a problem for the industry because car prices could rise and hurt sales. The EPA estimates the current standards will cost \$875 per vehicle, while a study commissioned by the auto industry estimates it at \$1,249

per vehicle by 2025. However, the government says fuel savings would more than offset the added costs.

If no agreement is reached, the administration could try to revoke California’s latest waiver, setting up an epic legal battle

over who controls emissions and fuel economy policies.

A senior White House official said March 14 that the adminis-

What is What with Trump CAFE Proposals

by DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) – President Donald Trump plans to re-examine federal fuel economy requirements for new cars and trucks.

The requirements were a centerpiece of President Barack Obama’s strategy to combat global warming. But Trump appears to be making good on a pledge to car company CEOs to reduce “unnecessary regulations.”

Here’s what’s happening:

What are CAFE and GHG standards?

CAFE (Corporate Average Fuel Economy) standards are miles-per-gallon targets for cars and trucks set by the U.S. government. The standards are based on size and are weighted by sales. Each manufacturer has a different requirement based on the models it sells.

Congress required the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to develop CAFE standards in 1975 after gasoline shortages during the Arab oil embargo. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency began regulating greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) from vehicles in 2007. The agencies work together to produce CAFE standards.

The standard for passenger cars stayed at 27.5 mpg from 1990 until 2007. In 2009, the government set a fuel economy standard of 34.1 mpg for cars and light trucks by 2016. In 2012, it set a new target of 54.5 mpg by 2025. The number can change depending on the mix of vehicles customers buy. Right now, it stands at 51.4 mpg because people are buying more SUVs and trucks.

Under the current standard, would my car get 54.5 miles a gallon in the year 2025?

No. Manufacturers can apply credits for various fuel-saving technologies to arrive at that figure. Real-world mileage would be closer to 36 mpg.

What’s happening now?

In the last days of the Obama administration, the EPA completed a review of the standards for model years 2022-25 and left them unchanged, saying the car companies have many affordable options to help them comply. The industry protested, saying the review was too hasty and didn’t consider the fact that gas prices have fallen and few consumers want the smallest, most fuel-efficient vehicles.

President Trump is reopening the evaluation process, which could lead to weaker standards.

Why would the government consider changing the standards?

President Trump wants automakers to expand production in the U.S. and hire more workers. In exchange, he has promised to cut regulations and taxes. Gasoline is more than \$1 per gallon cheaper than it was in 2012, when the standards were issued. The low prices hurt demand for more fuel-efficient cars. If those cars don’t sell, their high mileage can’t be counted toward an automaker’s corporate average fuel economy.

But environmental groups say weakening the standards would increase pollution and require consumers to spend more on gas.

How are automakers improving their fuel economy?

Manufacturers have introduced all-electric cars like the Chevrolet Bolt and increased the use of lightweight materials like aluminum. Engine technologies, such as direct fuel injection and

more efficient transmissions, are also contributing.

The standards give manufacturers extra credit for new technologies, such as hybrid engines for pickup trucks and stop-start systems, which automatically shut off the engine when the vehicle stops in traffic.

Do those added technologies make my vehicle more expensive?

Yes. In its final ruling in January, the EPA estimated the fuel economy standards will cost \$875 per vehicle. A study commissioned by the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers estimates the cost of compliance at \$1,249 per vehicle.

However, the EPA says the standards would save consumers up to \$1,620 in gas over the life of their vehicle.

If the standards are weakened, will that affect what kinds of cars are available?

Maybe. Automakers might choose to offer fewer electric or hybrid cars in the U.S., since those are less profitable than trucks and SUVs. They also could scrap subcompact cars, which are unpopular with U.S. consumers but help meet fuel economy targets.

There are caveats. Automakers will still have to meet rising fuel economy standards in China and Europe, so they won’t stop making efficient vehicles.

If gas prices rise, U.S. consumers might demand more fuel-efficient cars.

Finally, California and other blue states have a history of passing stricter standards than the rest of the country. If that continues, automakers would have to keep their most fuel-efficient models in U.S. showrooms, since California is the biggest market in the U.S.



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Faurecia Honored at Paris JEC for its Composite Tech

Faurecia, whose North American headquarters is in Auburn Hills, was honored at last week’s EC World 2017 Awards for the company’s innovative use of composite materials.

It was presented with a Sustainability award for the NAFILite project and a Process award for the Fast RTM project, said Faurecia spokesman Tony Sapienza.

Weight reduction is crucial to equipment suppliers and automakers who are seeking to curb emissions. A 10 kg reduction in vehicle weight is enough to cut CO2 emissions by 1 gram per kilometer, Sapienza said.

Faurecia designed and developed its hemp fiber-based NAFILite and NAFILite materials to help achieve these goals. Hemp is an eco-friendly, non-food crop that requires no pesticides, fertilizers or irrigation.

NAFILite is a combination of

NAFILite material and an injection (foaming) process used to expand the material through mold-opening technology.

Its stiff, microcellular (bubble) structure ensures much-improved performance and resistance. This requires less injected material, which leads to significant weight savings. The combination of weight reduction, renewable natural fibers and recyclable thermoplastic means NAFILite can reduce environmental impact by up to 30 percent. Faurecia uses both NAFILite and NAFILite in manufacturing structural automotive parts such as instrument panels, door panels and center consoles.

These parts are then covered with some leather or fabric upholstery.

“We are delighted to be chosen for this innovation in the JEC Awards. It is an outstanding op-

portunity to promote our material and shift the goalposts,” says Laurence Dufrancat, Innovation & Materials Global Domain manager at Faurecia.

“With this innovation, we can significantly reduce the environmental impact of automobiles. We have achieved weight savings of 30 percent compared with conventional materials. It’s a real revolution for the automotive industry.”

The all-French project is a result of the APM joint venture between Faurecia and Interval, a major French agricultural cooperative, Sapienza said. This commitment to the environment has now been enshrined by the JEC Awards, confirming the company’s determination to shape the future of mobility.

“We are very proud to have won the JEC Awards with IRT M2P for this innovation, which showcases French expertise,” says Gilles Nedelec, senior composites expert at Faurecia.

“The goal of the project was to develop a pilot line for mass production of automotive parts that could be scaled to other industries, such as aerospace, maritime, rail and even leisure.”

To ensure the traceability and quality of manufactured components, the platform is fully equipped to automate data collection, measure energy consumption and integrate control systems, Sapienza said.

As a result, the process could easily be adopted by other industries that need higher production rates, such as aerospace, rail transport and all other transport sectors.

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GM Betting Big on Its Low Cab Truck Line



The Chevrolet Low Cab truck line has been expanded for 2018.

At a time when GM sold its European operations, the company has doubled down on its truck operations.

Chevrolet will be expanding its range of Low Cab Forward trucks with a new dock-height Class 6 model – the 6500XD. The vehicles are expected to be available by the end of the year, said GM spokeswoman Rita Kass-Shamoun.

The 2018 Chevrolet Low Cab Forward 6500XD, like its Class 3, 4 and 5 stablemates, is a highly flexible platform designed for driver comfort, superior visibility and serviceability, and ease of upfit, said Kass-Shamoun.

The 6500XD adds significant extra capability:

- Standard equipment includes a 5.2-liter four-cylinder turbodiesel that delivers 520 lb.-ft. of torque, an Allison 2500 Series 6-speed automatic transmission (with PTO), Dana axles and a robust straight-rail frame.
- Front and rear axle ratings are 12,000 lbs. and 19,000 lbs., re-

spectively. Maximum GVWR is 25,950 lbs. – enough capability to haul heavy machinery.

- Eight wheelbases are available and bodies up to 30 feet long can be accommodated.

“Our goal is to offer the best work solutions and customer care in the business,” said Ed Peper, U.S. vice president, GM Fleet and Commercial Operations. “Our Low Cab Forward dealers and Upfitter Integration Group will work hand-in-hand with customers and their upfitters to spec the right truck for the job. After the sale, our dealers will be there to support customers with extended service hours and work-ready loaners.”

GM’s Upfitter Integration Group provides technical assistance to upfitters and serves as a liaison between Special Vehicle Manufacturers, end customers and several of GM’s engineering, marketing and service teams, Peper said. They also maintain a website that includes detailed body builder manuals, technical

bulletins and best practice manuals.

GM’s overall Commercial business has been growing steadily, with seven straight months of year-over-year market share gains, Peper said.

“Award-winning new products like the Chevrolet Malibu, Silverado and Colorado have helped GM Fleet earn more than 134 new accounts in the last three years,” Peper said. “At the same time, new products like the City Express small van, the Low Cab Forward range and the all-new medium duty conventional cab truck coming in 2018 make it possible for fleets to consolidate more of their business with us, which simplifies vehicle ordering, financing, maintenance, technical support and turn-in.”

This product offensive includes new CNG and LPG propulsion options and an industry-leading 20 diesel-powered cars, crossovers, vans and pickups, all of which are compatible with B20 biodiesel, Peper said.

GM is also expanding its suite of industry-leading driver connectivity and fleet management solutions for small businesses and fleet managers. At the beginning of March, the company announced that it would add Spireon to its roster of telematics service providers, joining Telogis and GM’s own Commercial Link tool.

These turnkey, scalable solutions can help with efficiency, idle time, labor, fleet mileage and maintenance-related downtime. They can also help provide insights into driver behavior. Because they are compatible with GM’s OnStar technology, no after-market hardware installations are required, Peper said.

VW Making Deals in Emissions Scandal

by TOM KRISHER and ED WHITE
Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) – By cooperating with federal investigators and quickly agreeing to compensate car owners, Volkswagen likely will avoid a massive criminal fine for cheating on diesel emissions tests and trying to cover it up.

The company on March 10 pleaded guilty to obstruction of justice and conspiracy over a brazen scheme to program nearly 600,000 vehicles to deceive the Environmental Protection Agency.

VW also agreed to pay \$4.3 billion in criminal and civil penalties. While that is the largest-ever fine imposed by the U.S. government on an automaker, the company could have been on the hook for much more.

Federal sentencing guidelines called for fines from \$17 billion to \$34 billion due to the size of the plot and because VW employees destroyed documents and data after learning of the government investigation.

The crimes were well-planned and “went to a very high level in the corporate structure,” Assistant U.S. Attorney John Neal told the court. VW won’t know its punishment for sure until sentenced April 21 by U.S. District Judge Sean Cox in Detroit. But prosecutors said that VW got a big discount on the penalty because it cooperated after fessing up to the crime.

The automaker’s general counsel, Manfred Doess, who was in court to agree to the plea, acknowledged the scheme lasted for nine years, from 2006 to 2015, and went to the level of just below the company’s board.

VW attorney Jason Weinstein said VW’s cooperation enabled U.S. authorities to quickly file charges against six German supervisors in the case. Only one is in U.S. custody, though, and it’s unlikely the others will be extra-

ditioned from Germany. One U.S. employee also was charged.

“I’ve never seen a company act more swiftly or aggressively to hold itself accountable for what it did wrong,” said Weinstein, a former federal prosecutor.

VW agreed to compensate owners for more than they would have received under criminal statutes, Neal said. Car owners combined will get up to \$11 billion for vehicle buybacks and compensation as part of a civil settlement agreed to last year. The company also agreed to environmental remediation and electric vehicle investment, and its behavior will be watched by a monitor for three years.

Although both sides asked Cox to sentence VW on March 10, Cox said he wanted more time to study the terms of the punishment – including a \$2.8 billion criminal fine. If Cox rejects the recommendation, VW can withdraw its plea. If the company sticks with a guilty plea, Cox still could order harsher penalties.

An attorney for 300 VW owners who have opted out of a larger court settlement objected to the

penalty, contending that owners should get restitution through the criminal court. But the Justice Department and VW argued that the \$11 billion in restitution VW agreed to give owners in the civil lawsuit was sufficient. That was part of a \$15 billion settlement with U.S. environmental authorities and car owners approved last year.

VW’s total cost of the scandal now has been pegged at more than \$21 billion. Although the cost is staggering and would bankrupt many companies, VW has the money, with \$33 billion in cash on hand.

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Buick Can Keep Basketball Fans Informed

It has begun – March Madness. And Buick has come up with a way NCAA basketball fans can keep up with the tournament even if they’re in their cars.

NCAA March Madness started on March 16, and Buick owners in the U.S. with an in-vehicle OnStar 4G LTE Wi-Fi hotspot use a new unlimited prepaid data plan enabled by AT&T. The plan is only \$20 a month and available across Buick’s entire 2017 retail portfolio of vehicles, said GM spokesman Phil Colley.

Buick drivers and their passengers already love being able to access email, check social media and live stream video from their vehicles, Colley said, and now passengers can stream all their favorite sporting events without being concerned about running out of data or missing any game-winning plays.

Such packages are becoming

more popular, Colley said. Last year, Buick owners increased their OnStar 4G LTE data usage by 285 percent compared to 2015.

As a longstanding NCAA partner, Buick is especially excited to have this plan available for March Madness, one of the most streamed sporting events of the year, Colley said. March Madness streaming reached 65 million people in 2016 and total live streaming of the tournament hit an all-time high of 1.1 billion minutes.

“Our customers’ lives are increasingly more mobile and it is important we provide connectivity solutions that meet their on-the-go expectations,” said Duncan Aldred, vice president, Global Buick and GMC. “We are providing our owners with a data plan where the only limit is turning the car off.”

In addition to the 4G LTE connection enabled by AT&T, the OnStar Basic Plan comes standard on all new Buick retail models, Aldred said.

The Basic Plan includes select remote vehicle services and the OnStar AtYourService marketplace via the myBuick mobile app among other features, Colley said.

“As an NCAA Corporate Champion, we’re proud to play a role in delivering this capability to Buick customers,” said Joe Mosele, vice president, Internet of Things Solutions, AT&T. “March Madness is one of the most streamed sporting events in the world, and with AT&T’s 4G LTE-enabled Wi-Fi and this new



Fans can follow March Madness in their cars, thanks to Buick.

unlimited data plan, passengers can enjoy endless entertainment on the go.”

For more information on plans and pricing, visit OnStar.com, Colley said.

Volkswagen Subsidiary Audi Headquarters Searched

BERLIN (AP) – German media report that authorities are searching offices of Audi in connection with an investigation into the luxury automaker’s parent company Volkswagen’s cheating on diesel emissions tests.

The daily Sueddeutsche Zeitung and public ARD television reported that Audi offices at its headquarters in Ingolstadt, as well as buildings in the states of Baden-Wuerttemberg and Lower Saxony, were being searched March 15.

The raids come in connection with a fraud investigation launched by Munich prosecutors several weeks ago.

Neither Munich nor Ingolstadt prosecutors could be reached immediately for comment.

Volkswagen pleaded guilty March 10 in the U.S. to a scheme to get around American pollution rules. If a judge agrees to the Justice Department’s sentencing recommendation, the scandal will cost the company more than \$20 billion in the U.S. alone.

On March 14, Matthias Mueller, CEO of Volkswagen, said the United States remains a “core market” for the company despite its diesel emissions scandal and has underlined that it hopes to expand there. The VW brand has only a small share in the U.S. market although it is important for the company’s luxury brands Porsche and Audi. It makes cars in Chattanooga, Tenn.

Wipro Opens New Research Site in Detroit

Wipro Limited, a global information technology, consulting and business process services company headquartered in India, on March 15 opened its Automotive Engineering Center (AEC) in Detroit.

The center aims to drive innovation in connected vehicle concepts as well as design, product engineering, digital customer-vehicle experiences, artificial intelligence, and sensors-driven advanced vehicle data analytics, said Wipro spokesman Adam Gasper.

The Wipro’s AEC is part of Wipro’s vision to build a global network of delivery centers that offer best-in-class engineering and IT services, augmented by leading-edge automotive domain and digital solutions, Gasper said. The center will serve as a hub to support the automotive engineering and IT requirements of Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and Tier I suppliers based in North America.

This center will use local talent for delivering product design and supporting the development and validation of automotive cockpit electronic products such as navigation systems, connectivity systems, instrument clusters, Head-Up Displays (HUDs), advanced safety systems, vehicle diagnostics and advanced analytics, and end-to-end connected vehicle solutions.

“Wipro is committed to addressing the local and global needs of its engineering customers, and assisting them in gaining both scale and time-to-market advantages,” said Anita Ganti, senior vice president and global head, Product Engineering Services, Wipro Limited. “This center, located in the automotive hub of Detroit, will enable us to deliver differentiated connected automotive engineering and innovation-led solutions for our customers.”

Alex Beylin, vice president and Global Automotive Business

Head, Wipro Limited, said, “This center will showcase Wipro’s automotive engineering and digital technology capabilities and will also enable effective collaboration within the south-east Michigan automotive community.”

Wipro has over two decades of experience in delivering differentiated solutions for leading global automotive electronic Tier I suppliers and OEMs and has been a partner in their digital transformation journey.

With its automotive product design and engineering expertise in electronics, software, engineering design services, manufacturing execution systems, product lifecycle management, Cloud solutions, and enterprise IT applications management, and remote infrastructure services, Wipro has been able to deliver a range of products that create unique user experiences with highest levels of reliability, Gasper said.

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10,000 miles year

\$494 total due at signing (includes first month payment)

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CONVENIENCE FWD Lease Offer MSRP: \$40,060

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Google Spin-Off Waymo Accuses Uber of Stealing Vital Robot-Driving Technology

by MICHAEL LIEDTKE
AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) – A self-driving car company founded by Google is presenting new evidence to support allegations that a former manager stole technology sold to Uber to help the ride-hailing service build its own robot-powered vehicles.

Waymo, a project hatched by Google eight years ago, wove its tale of deceit in sworn statements filed March 10 in a San Francisco federal court.

The documents try to make a case that former Waymo manager Anthony Levandowski conceived a scheme to heist key trade secrets before leaving the company early last year to launch an autonomous vehicle startup that he had been discussing with Uber.

It's the latest salvo in a battle that started last month when Waymo sued Levandowski and Uber for alleged theft of the technology for "LiDAR," an array of sensors that enable self-driving cars to see what's around them so they can safely navigate roads. Experts say an effective Li-

DAR system typically takes years to develop.

After leaving Waymo, Levandowski started a self-driving truck company called Otto that Uber bought for \$680 million to accelerate an expansion into autonomous vehicles.

Uber brushed off Waymo's claims as "a baseless attempt to slow down a competitor."

Waymo is mounting its attack with the help of one of Levandowski's former colleagues, Pierre-Yves Droz, the leader of Waymo's LiDAR project.

In a sworn statement, Droz said Levandowski confided in January 2016 that he planned to "replicate" Waymo's technology at Otto. A Google forensics expert said he determined that Levandowski began downloading thousands of files containing Waymo's trade secrets in December 2015, according to another sworn statement.

Levandowski had previously acknowledged to Droz that he began discussing self-driving cars with Uber in 2015, according to the documents. Levandowski, "told me that it would be nice to create a new self-driving car

startup and that Uber would be interested in buying the team responsible for the LiDAR we were developing at Google," Droz said in his declaration.

Then, again in January 2016, Levandowski said that he had been at Uber's San Francisco headquarters seeking an investment in his startup, Droz said.

Waymo also filed papers seeking a court order to block Uber from using any of the technology that it believes Levandowski stole.

If a judge grants that request, it could force Uber to halt its current tests of self-driving cars in Pittsburgh and Phoenix. It's unclear how much of the technology targeted in Waymo's lawsuit is being used in the Uber self-driving cars that are currently picking up passengers in those cities.

Levandowski wasn't alone in his alleged betrayal, according to Waymo.

Other sworn statements filed March 10 identified two other former Waymo employees accused of stealing technology in July 2016 shortly before they joined Uber. They are: Sameer Kshirsagar, Waymo's former global supply manager, and Radu Radutu, an engineer in Waymo's LiDAR department.

The dispute between Waymo and Uber highlights the high stakes in the race to build self-driving cars that promise not only to revolutionize the way people get around but also the automobile industry. Waymo and Uber are two of the early leaders, while long-established car companies such as Ford, Toyota and General Motors are scrambling to catch up.

Waymo now operates as a subsidiary of Google's corporate parent, Alphabet Inc.

Intel Spends \$15 Billion For Autonomous Firm

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) – Intel will buy Israel's Mobileye in a deal valued at about \$15 billion, instantly propelling the computer chip and technology giant to the forefront of autonomous vehicle technology.

The deal announced March 14 combines Mobileye's market-leading software that processes information from cameras and other sensors with Intel's hardware, data centers and its own software, giving automakers a one-stop place to shop for fully autonomous car systems.

"This acquisition essentially merges the intelligent eyes of the autonomous car with the intelligent brain that actually drives the car," Intel CEO Brian Krzanich wrote in a note to employees about the acquisition.

The combination, expected to close by year's end, will allow the companies to bring components to market faster at a lower cost, solidifying Mobileye's leadership position, officials from the companies said.

Automakers and some technology companies are testing autonomous vehicles in California, Michigan and a few other states. Nearly all use Mobileye's software, which reads inputs from cameras, radar, and laser sensors and makes decisions on what an autonomous car should do.

Jerusalem-based Mobileye says it has contracts with 27 different automakers. It also makes software that runs automatic emergency braking and semi-autonomous cruise control systems that are in cars and trucks on the road today.

Autonomous cars will need higher levels of connectivity to the Internet and access to bigger data centers, which Intel can provide, Krzanich said. The two companies also will combine highly detailed mapping efforts. Automakers, Krzanich said, want lower costs, faster times to market and the ability to get an autonomous driving system in one place.

"If you put all of that together, you really get an end-to-end solution for autonomous driving," said Mobileye Chairman and co-founder Amnon Shashua, who will continue to lead the combined autonomous car unit.

In the deal, Intel Corp. will pay

\$63.54 for each share of Mobileye N.V., a 34 percent premium to its March 10 closing price.

The boards of both companies still have to approve the transaction. The companies put the equity value of the deal at \$15.3 billion.

The deal is the latest combination as automakers and technology firms race to build autonomous cars and for leadership in life-saving electronics. Mobileye, with 660 employees, has been forming partnerships worldwide as its growth continued as a separate company. BMW, Intel and Mobileye partnered last year, and Mobileye teamed up with Delphi Automotive to develop building blocks for a fully autonomous car.

Competitors also formed partnerships in 2016. Ride-hailing company Uber Technologies and Volvo signed a \$300 million deal for Volvo to provide SUVs to Uber for autonomous vehicle research. General Motors Co. invested \$500 million in Uber rival Lyft Inc. to develop a fleet of autonomous electric taxis.

Google has a partnership with Fiat Chrysler to work on autonomous minivans, and Volkswagen is working with Uber competitor Gett.

Ford has invested \$150 million in laser sensor maker Velodyne, and it recently announced a \$1 billion purchase of budding robotics startup Argo AI.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu praised the Intel acquisition of Mobileye, which he said was the largest deal in the country's history. He said he's been assured that the company's operations will stay in Israel.

"The purchase dramatically proves that the vision we are leading is coming true. Israel is turning into a global technology center, not just in cyber but also in the automotive industry," he said.

The combined global autonomous driving company, which includes Mobileye and Intel's autonomous driving group, will be based in Israel, supporting both companies' existing production programs and building on relationships with automakers, Tier 1 parts suppliers and semiconductor partners, the companies said.



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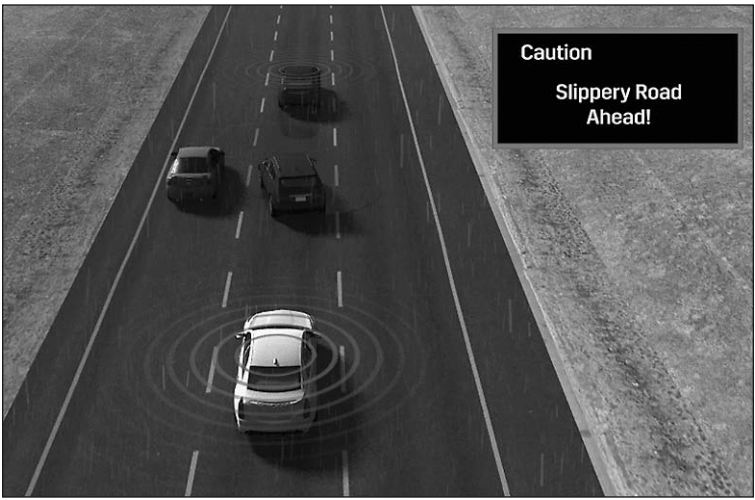
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V2V tech will make it possible for cars to 'talk' to each other.

Mopar NHRA Team Strong

Florida's Gainesville Raceway has been synonymous with speed since 1969. For close to five decades, some of drag racing's most revered records have been set at the track's prestigious NHRA Gatornationals each March.

This year, Mopar and Dodge will look to continue that tradition in both the Pro and Sportsman classes across four days of competition.

The four Mopar-backed Dodge Charger R/T Funny Cars from Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) are off to a stellar start on the young season and hope to carry that momentum into the first East Coast race on the 2017 NHRA Mello Yello Drag Racing Series calendar.

To kick off the year, two-time series champion Matt Hagan has collected two consecutive Wally trophies in February with wins in the NHRA Winternationals at Auto Club Raceway at Pomona and the Arizona Nationals at Wild Horse Pass Motorsports Park behind the wheel of his Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T car.

All four DSR Funny Cars currently sit in the top eight in the point standings.

In the Top Fuel ranks, DSR's Mopar drivers are off to as hot a start as their Funny Car brethren. Leah Pritchett won her hometown Winternationals in the Papa John's/Mopar Pennzoil Dragster on Feb. 12, then followed it up two weeks later with a win in the Arizona Nationals for the second year in a row.

She also set a new national elapsed-time record during qualifying for that event with a pass of 3.658 seconds at 329.34 mph.

While Pritchett leads the point standings and her team is looking to make even more power in Gainesville, Tony Schumacher is solidly in the second spot in the Mopar-powered U.S. Army Dragster.

2016 Funny Car World Champion Ron Capps is the most recent Mopar-powered Dodge winner of the Gatornationals, claiming the event title in 2015.

He is a three-time Gatornationals champion, while Tony Schumacher has won the event four times.

Cadillac unveiled Vehicle-to-Vehicle (V2V) communications this month in the CTS performance sedan, beginning with 2017 interim model year cars in production now.

V2V-equipped vehicles share information that can be used to alert drivers to upcoming potential hazards, laying the groundwork for a connected, safer future, said GM spokesman Steve Martin.

Cadillac's V2V solution uses Dedicated Short-Range Communications (DSRC) and GPS and can handle 1,000 messages per second from vehicles up to nearly 1,000 feet away.

For example, Martin said, when a car approaches an urban intersection, the technology scans the vicinity for other vehicles and tracks their positions, directions and speeds, warning the driver of potential hazards that might otherwise be invisible.

"From the introduction of air bags to the debut of OnStar, Cadillac continues its heritage of pioneering safety and connectivity advances," said Richard Brekus, Cadillac global director of Product Strategy.

"V2V essentially enables the car to sense around corners. Connecting vehicles through V2V holds tremendous potential, as this technology enables the car to acquire and analyze information outside the bounds of the driver's field of vision. As an early mover, we look forward to seeing its benefit multiply as more V2V-equipped vehicles hit the road."

V2V-enabled data alerts drivers of potentially hazardous situations ahead, giving them additional time to react. Common hazardous scenarios that prompt alerts are hard braking, slippery conditions and disabled

vehicles, Brekus said. Through the next-generation Cadillac user experience infotainment system, drivers can customize alerts to show in the instrument cluster and available head-up display.

Only vehicles equipped with compatible V2V systems communicate with one another, Brekus said. Multiple V2V-equipped vehicles create an ad hoc wireless network that allows for the transfer of information without relying on sight lines, good weather conditions or cellular coverage.

The V2V technology on the 2017 CTS operates on the 5.9 GHz spectrum allocated by the Federal Communications Commission.

V2V is included as a standard feature on the 2017 CTS in the U.S. and Canada and complements a robust suite of available active safety features, Martin said.

CTS offers Driver Awareness and Driver Assist active safety features such as Adaptive Cruise Control with full-speed range, automatic front and rear braking, forward collision mitigation, lane keep assist and rear cross traffic alert.

In 2016, Cadillac pioneered the world's first Rear Camera Mirror, increasing the driver's rearward vision by approximately 300 percent.



Employees check out a 3D printer at the Ford Innovation Center.

Ford Motor Company Tries New 3D Printer Methods

Ford Motor Company is exploring how large-scale one-piece auto parts, like spoilers, could be printed for prototyping and future production vehicles, as the first automaker to pilot the Stratasys Infinite Build 3D printer.

Capable of printing automotive parts of practically any shape or length, the Stratasys Infinite Build system could be a breakthrough for vehicle manufacturing – providing a more efficient, affordable way to create tooling, prototype parts and components for low-volume vehicles such as Ford Performance products, as well as personalized car parts, said Ford spokeswoman Lloryn Love.

The new 3D printer system is housed at Ford Research and Innovation Center in Dearborn.

"With Infinite Build technology, we can print large tools, fixtures and components, making us more nimble in design iterations," said Ellen Lee, Ford technical leader, additive manufacturing research. "We're excited to have early access to Stratasys' new technology to help steer development of large-scale printing for automotive applications and requirements."

Wider adoption of 3D printing has been driven by recent technology advances, new areas of application and government support, according to Global Industry Analysts, Lee said.

By 2020, the global market for this emerging technology is expected to reach \$9.6 billion, the organization reports. As 3D printing becomes increasingly efficient and affordable, companies are employing it for manufacturing applications in everything from aerospace to education to medicine.

3D printing could bring immense benefits for automotive production, including the ability to produce lighter-weight parts that could lead to greater fuel efficiency, Lee said. A 3D-printed spoiler, for instance, may weigh less than half its cast metal counterpart.

The technology is more cost efficient for production of low-volume parts for prototypes and specialized race car compo-

nents, Lee said. Additionally, Ford could use 3D printing to make larger tooling and fixtures, along with personalized components.

With 3D printing, specifications for a part are transferred from the computer-aided design program to the printer's computer, which analyzes the design. The device then goes to work, printing one layer of material at a time, then gradually stacking layers into a finished 3D object.

When the system detects the raw material or supply material canister is empty, a robotic arm automatically replaces it with a full canister, Lee said. This allows the printer to operate unattended for hours – days, even.

Using traditional methods to develop, say, a new intake manifold, an engineer would create a computer model of the part, then have to wait months for prototype tooling to be produced. With 3D printing technology, Ford can print the intake manifold in a couple of days, at a significant cost reduction.

3D printing is not yet fast enough for high-volume manufacturing, but it is more cost-efficient for low-volume production, Lee said. Additionally, minus the constraints of mass-production processes, 3D-printed parts can be designed to function more efficiently.

Nissan Recalls 2012 Vehicles

NEW YORK (AP) – Nissan is recalling more than 54,000 cars because of curtain and seat-mounted air bags that may unexpectedly deploy when the door is slammed.

Nissan North America says the recall affects the 2012 Nissan Versa vehicles. It says the problem may be caused by the degradation of the side impact sensor connector pins. The unexpected deployment of the air bags can increase the risk of injury.

Nissan says dealers will install a new jumper harness and replace the side impact sensors free of charge. Car owners can contact Nissan customer service at 1-800-647-726.

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