

Dodge Launches a New Durango SUV Police Vehicle

Dodge is expanding its police vehicle lineup, adding a new Pursuit version of its Dodge Durango.

“Unofficial testing results at the Michigan State Police 2018

model-year vehicle evaluation event created such a stir among law enforcement agencies that we simply had to find a way to build this vehicle,” said Steve Beahm, head of Passenger Car

Brands, Dodge/SRT, Chrysler and Fiat – FCA North America. “The Dodge Durango is already known as the Charger of SUVs, so it is only natural that the new Durango Pursuit complements the

Charger Pursuit in police fleets across the country.”

The 2018 Dodge Durango Pursuit is powered by the legendary 5.7L Hemi V8, coupled with a full-time, active all-wheel-drive

(AWD) system, said FCA spokeswoman Kristin Starnes. This is the same powertrain combination most commonly deployed in

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“FIRST IN THE HEART OF DETROIT”

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ESTABLISHED 1933 AS NEW CENTER NEWS AND 1983 AS OAKLAND TECH NEWS

MAY 21, 2018

Belle Isle is Getting Ready For Chevy's 2018 Grand Prix

As work begins on Belle Isle, a number of new enhancements were unveiled for the 2018 Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix presented by Lear, set for June 1-3.

The most important change coming to the Grand Prix this year is the reduced time that the event will spend at Belle Isle Park, said Grand Prix spokesman Merrill Cain.

To minimize the amount of time spent on Belle Isle during the prime early days of summer, the Grand Prix began its build out on the island on April 16 – one week later than in 2017, Cain said.

Since 2015, the Grand Prix has reduced its total time spent on the island by 27 days – a direct response to park-goers who requested less time overall for the buildout and removal of the race

venue infrastructure, Cain said.

At over 2.3 miles, the Grand Prix currently features the longest track distance of any professional temporary street circuit in North America.

Already one of the fastest constructed race venues in the world based on a days-per-mile formula, the new accelerated schedule will make the process even faster for the Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix presented by Lear, Cain said.

Also new for 2018, the Grand Prix will build its race track barriers and fencing on the inside of the course first, instead of building both sides of the track at once, as in past years.

This new process will allow unobstructed views of the Detroit River waterfront for as long as

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



The Verizon IndyCar Series by Team Penske will be one of the race cars at this year's Grand Prix.

Martinrea Opens its Own Technical Center

by Jim Stickford

The auto industry is undergoing massive change and companies that will survive are the ones that can innovate. To that end, auto supplier Martinrea has officially opened up its new Tech Center in Auburn Hills.

Rob Wildeboer, executive chairman of Martinrea, said the new tech center, which broke ground 19 months ago was a real reflection of the way the auto industry is changing.

“The culture of a company is based on the idea that people have to come to work and feel safe,” Wildeboer said. “The company needs the element of family

and an element of individuality. When employees are allowed personal space, they can better offer personal service to our customers.”

So the tech center has office space where employees can stand or sit, depending on their preferences. There is also reserved space where a group of employees can get together and talk about issues they are facing, Wildeboer said.

The whole idea behind the new building is to create an atmosphere where different people from different departments can feel comfortable and collaborate.

Martinrea's two-story 108,000-square-foot technical center

combines research and development, process and product engineering, and testing capabilities for all of its business units under one roof in an open and collaborative environment.

The facility is currently home to 156 employees representing all business units and functional areas, with the ability to expand and add additional jobs, said Martinrea President and CEO Pat D'Eramo.

Located in Auburn Hills, the new facility features open meeting spaces for team collaboration, a fitness center, outdoor patio, and electric vehicle charging

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Mopar's Center Line Parts Distribution Center is award winner.

Mopar's Center Line Site Gets FCA Bronze Award

The Mopar Parts Distribution Center (PDC) in Center Line, Mich., earned Bronze status in FCA's World Class Logistics (WCL) methodology, making it the first FCA distribution unit in North America to reach an award level in the program.

Similar to the World Class Manufacturing (WCM) methodology, WCL empowers distribution operations through FCA US to systematically reduce waste and improve quality by focusing on 10 technical and 10 managerial key pillars, said FCA spokesman Darren Jacobs.

“We are committed to being all in service of the people who drive us,” said Pietro Gorlier, head of FCA's Parts and Service (Mopar).

“To fulfil our brand promise, we need to deliver the right part at the right time with the right quality. One way to do this is by becoming more efficient and

holding ourselves to high operational standards. This is why I want to congratulate the nearly 300 employees at the Center Line PDC, who have embraced the WCL principle and are now striving for Silver, as we continue to spread the WCL methodology throughout our global parts supply chain.”

The Center Line PDC earned its Bronze status during a recent two-day audit, Jacobs said. Dr. Luciano Massone, lead auditor and former president of the World Class Manufacturing Association, along with WCL auditor John Weist, commended Center Line for its workplace and logistics integration to improve productivity.

The auditors also recognized the achievements in safety and quality as well as the overall approach toward the development

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D'Eramo planting a tree at the grand opening of Martinrea's new tech center in Auburn Hills.

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Oakland County Sobriety Court Gets Certified

The Sobriety Court program at 52-1 District Court in Novi is the first in Michigan to be certified by the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO).

The certification indicates that the sobriety court has met or exceeded the standards set by the SCAO after a stringent evaluation. The SCAO also certified 52-1 District Court's Drug Court program. These certifications mean 52-1 District Court will be able to apply to the Michigan Supreme Court for grants to support its specialty courts, said Oakland County spokesman Bill Mullan.

"Our sobriety and drug court programs are successful because of the collaborative effort of our staff and community partners," Presiding Judge of 52-1 District Court Travis Reeds said. "This certification by the SCAO means we'll be able to enhance our specialty courts by applying for grants."

The Sobriety Court program at 52-1 District Court began in 2001.

Belle Isle is Revving Up for This Year's Grand Prix Race

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

possible leading up to race weekend, Cain said.

Another new process implemented for 2018 will provide regular ingress and egress on Belle Isle through Memorial Day weekend in order to help alleviate any holiday traffic issues affected by the track buildout in past years.

Along with its shortened overall time on Belle Isle, the Grand Prix will feature some new viewing locations on race weekend in 2018. Based on feedback from the annual Grand Prix fan survey, Grandstand 3 – formally located at the end of Turn 3 on the right side of the race track – will be moved to the left side of the track.

This new location will create a better view for fans to see the cars race on one of the best passing zones at the circuit, before the competitors enter the tricky Turn 4, Cain said. Because it was such a well-received addition to the Grand Prix in 2017, the size of the popular backstretch viewing area will be doubled in 2018 and the event is adding two new viewing platforms near Turn 2 and Turn 3.

All of the grandstands and viewing platforms in these areas at the Grand Prix are General Admission (GA), and all GA ticket prices remain the same for the 2018 event.

The Belle Isle Club, a popular addition in 2017 which features an exclusive hospitality area located adjacent to the racetrack, will expand to the ground floor of the historic Belle Isle Casino, allowing for indoor access, Cain said.

Fans can purchase passes to the Belle Isle Club as an enhancement to their Grand Prix ticket package. The Belle Isle Casino has housed the City of Windsor



A bird's-eye view of Belle Isle in Detroit shows work being done to set up the Grand Prix course for 2018.

International Media Center since 2007, but in 2018 the Media Center will relocate to a large tent adjacent to the Casino along Casino Way.

The place where the top finishers of all seven races at the Grand Prix celebrate will also have a new location in 2018, Cain said.

The Autotrader Winners Circle will move from its former location near the Belle Isle Casino to the signature landmark on Belle Isle – the James Scott Memorial Fountain.

The fountain will provide a memorable backdrop for race winners, their teams and fans to celebrate their performance at the Grand Prix. All fans that have passes to the Fifth Third Bank Paddock will be able to access

the Scott Fountain area and witness all of the exciting activities in the Autotrader Winners Circle throughout race weekend, Cain said.

And for the ninth consecutive year, the international partnership between the City of Windsor and the Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix presented by Lear will be renewed in 2018 as the Grand Prix will showcase the unique "two-nation destination," Cain said. With Belle Isle Park located on the Detroit River between Windsor, Ontario, Canada and Detroit, fans on both sides of the border will once again enjoy the Grand Prix.

A key element of the renewed partnership between the Grand Prix and the City of Windsor is a premiere Canadian ticket pack-

age, which will provide fans a fast and easy way to cross the international border via Transit Windsor bus service, along with their specially-priced Grand Prix tickets, Cain said.

The Grand Prix Canadian package that includes race tickets and round-trip transportation can be purchased online through snapdwindsor.com or in person at the Windsor International Transit Terminal.

"We're proud to host the Grand Prix at such a unique venue on Belle Isle, located between the shores of Canada and the United States on the Detroit River, and we're excited to welcome fans from both sides of the border to our weekend celebration June 1-3," said Bud Denker, chairman of the Chevrolet Detroit Grand Prix presented by Lear.

"We appreciate the continued partnership with the City of Windsor and we're pleased to once again provide a special ticket offer to our Canadian fans that includes fast, safe and reliable transportation to Belle Isle through Transit Windsor."

Center Line Mopar Site Earns Award

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of cost-effective parts distribution processes, Jacobs said.

In 2017, the warehouse quality in Center Line improved by 16 percent, energy consumption decreased by 11 percent and productivity gains reached five percent, with further improvements in 2018, Jacobs said.

Center Line shipped close to 72 million parts last year, and is one of more than 50 Mopar PDCs around the world, with 23 located in North America.

Last year, FCA US opened two new Parts Distribution Centers in the U.S., with a combined investment of \$22.6 million generating more than 170 jobs, Jacobs said.

During the brand's 80-plus years, Mopar has introduced numerous industry-first features including vehicle-information apps, and was the first to introduce smartphone vehicle-information applications, a new channel of communication with consumers.

Mopar also introduced wiADVISOR and was first to incorporate a tablet-based service lane tool and Electronic Vehicle Tracking System (EVTS). It was also first to market with a new interactive vehicle tracking device that sends the owner a text when vehicle is driven too fast or too far – especially when teens are driving the car.

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Dodge Brand Releases New Durango SUV Police Vehicle

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played in the Dodge Charger Pursuit, the top-selling police sedan in the United States police vehicle market.

The Durango Pursuit also offers a two-speed transfer case for true low-range off-road capability and incorporates larger, heavy-duty anti-lock brakes that deliver a 60-0 mile per hour (mph) stopping distance of 134 feet, Starnes said.

Other notable standard features of the 2018 Dodge Durango Police Pursuit vehicle, said Starnes, include:

- 5.7L V8 Hemi with Fuel Saver Technology delivers best-in-class horsepower (360) and torque (390 lb.-ft.);
 - Eight-speed automatic transmission that delivers quick shifts and improved fuel economy;
 - Rear-wheel-drive-based drivetrain, the foundation for Durango's outstanding on-road driving performance.
- Standard AWD further enhances driver confidence by leveraging the SUV's 50/50 weight distribution;
- Segment's longest wheel base (119.8 inches), which

- provides added stability and improved handling;
- Best-in-class 7,200-lb. towing capability;
- 8.1 inches of ground clearance;
- ParkView rear backup camera with ParkSense alert;
- Eight-way power adjusting driver seat controls;
- Air conditioning with air filtration;
- Under-vehicle mount for spare tire, maximizing interior cargo space and driver and passenger accessibility;
- Class-exclusive, K-9 friendly Tri-Zone interior temperature control;
- Trailer sway control;
- Spot lamp wiring prep package;
- 220-amp alternator;
- 800 cold cranking amp (CCA) battery;
- Heavy-duty oil cooler and water pump;
- Power locking fuel filler door.

The new 2018 Dodge Durango Pursuit V8 AWD is available for order for a limited time, Starnes said.

For more information, law enforcement agencies should call 800-999-3533.



Police departments now have a choice between a Durango SUV or a Dodge Charger pursuit sedan.

Ram Truck Interior Doesn't Stint on Class

It's wonderful to have a vehicle with inner and outer beauty, which is good news for fans of the Ram 1500 pickup truck, said FCA spokesman Nick Cappa.

The new 2019 Ram 1500 has been named one of *Ward's* 10 Best Interiors for 2018, and that

something that matters in this competitive pickup truck market, Cappa said.

"Today, there is nothing a luxury car has over the Ram 1500 in terms of interior quality," Cappa said. "Right away when you get in you notice that it has more leather and metal surfaces than other trucks made by our competitors, more by a long shot. You look inside and you'll see a giant 12-inch Uconnect 4C touchscreen. The reconfigurable console in 12 different ways that customers can set for their own use. No one calls shotgun anymore because the rear seating is as luxurious as the front seats. They even have heated and cooled seats in the back. These are features that cause people to move out of SUVs into pickups. That help us move forward in interior design."

"The all-new 2019 Ram 1500 is a no-compromise truck that sets the standard for interior comfort and refinement. We are honored that *WardsAuto* has chosen the Ram 1500 for *Ward's* 10 Best Interiors list," said Mike Manley, head of Ram Brand. "We've added unique technology, materials and storage solutions to give customers a premium experience while staying true to the hard-working nature of the Ram 1500."

The *WardsAuto* editorial staff selected the 10 winners after evaluating 40 vehicles, Cappa said. All contenders for the annual award were completely new or significantly upgraded for the 2018 or 2019 model years.

"Starting with the eye-catching 12-in. touchscreen that dominates the instrument panel, the 2019 Ram 1500 shows the world what is possible inside a full-size pickup truck," said Drew Winter, Senior Content Director, *WardsAuto/Informa*. "In addition to the ultra-sophisticated electronics, the materials and design details in the Limited and Laramie Longhorn editions would be at home in a luxury car costing six figures. And, on top of that are dozens of surprise and delight features that turn the Ram 1500 into a lifestyle vehicle for many different – and fun – lifestyles."

The winners will be honored on May 30 at the *WardsAuto* Interiors Conference in Detroit's Cobo Conference Center.

For 2019, new features, technology and premium materials help the completely redesigned Ram 1500 become the class leader in quality, comfort and durability, Cappa said. Each trim level is uniquely characterized including special fonts that reflect their individual charm.

The new instrument panel combines a strong structurally interlocking appearance covered in softer forms, pushing up and

toward the cabin. As a centerpiece, the 2019 Ram 1500 features the first application of Uconnect 4C NAV on a 12-inch fully configurable touchscreen, tailor-made for various Ram models.

The touchscreen can house one application, such as the navigation map, across the whole 12-inch screen, or can be divided in half, operating two different applications at once. An all-new toggle switch bank lies below the touchscreen giving physical control of specific features. Redundant HVAC controls are located on both sides of the display.

An active noise cancellation system on 5.7-liter Hemi V8 equipped models and acoustic glass reduce ambient sounds down to a low 67.1 db – the quietest Ram 1500 ever.

The center stack has been raised and brought closer to the driver to accommodate the 12-inch Uconnect touchscreen and to improve overall reachability of system controls, Cappa said. The driver also benefits nearly an inch of additional travel in seat height and a new telescoping steering wheel to achieve the ideal driving position.

The new HVAC system features nearly 25 percent more air flow at lower noise levels, including larger front defroster vents for better performance. Rear passengers will enjoy 50 percent more airflow when compared to the previous generation.

AAA Says State Seeing Rise in Gasoline Prices

DEARBORN, Mich. (AP) – AAA Michigan says average gas prices statewide have risen about 7 cents in the past week.

The Dearborn-based auto club said on the evening of May 13 that the average price for self-serve regular unleaded gasoline was about \$2.93 per gallon.

That figure shows that prices are about 52 cents more than at the same point last year, according to AAA Michigan.

Michigan's lowest average price was about \$2.85 in the Traverse City area. The highest was about \$2.97 in the Ann Arbor area.

The Detroit-area's average was about \$2.94, up about 6 cents per gallon.

AAA says gasoline inventories in the Great Lakes and other parts of the central United States have declined steadily for eight weeks.

Nationally, an increase in demand has lifted pump prices.

AAA Michigan surveys daily fuel prices at 2,800 gas stations across the state.

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EPA Report Says More Emissions Checks Needed

WASHINGTON (AP) – Federal regulators have stepped up the kind of testing that could have caught years of emissions-rigging by Volkswagen.

The conclusion made by regulators is that there is a real need to do more to keep automakers from duping them again on pollution.

The report was issued by the Environmental Protection Agency's inspector general on May 15.

The federal audit looked into how EPA regulators missed Volkswagen's rigged diesel-emission controls that let cars pass laboratory testing for pollutants, but then spew many times the allowable limit of pollutants when the vehicles in question were being driven on the road by unsuspecting drivers.

Outside experts told EPA internal auditors there were no clear red flags that regulators should have spotted, especially given the sophistication of VW's scheme to get around the emissions tests.

Federal prosecution led to indictment of six of the automaker's executives and employees and \$4.3 billion in penalties, among other fines and settlements.

Auditors confirmed that the EPA fulfilled its pledge to increase testing that better replicates real-world driving and could have caught Volkswagen's emissions rigging.

Critics had called the EPA's testing methods predictable and outdated. Researchers at West Virginia University, working with an environmental nonprofit, caught the fraud through on-road testing in 2014.

The audit recommends a series of other mostly procedural steps, such as better internal controls on the EPA's testing.

It also urges federal regulators to increase information sharing with California's state air board, which also began looking harder at Volkswagen diesel cars in the wake of the university study's results being made available to the public at large.

EPA air regulators have agreed to the recommendations, the audit says.

The EPA said its revised testing since the Volkswagen scandal helped discover at least one other automaker attempting to alter emission controls, auditors said.

The EPA cited Fiat Chrysler in January 2017 over what the audit called an illegal emissions device in some of the company's diesel pickup trucks. Fiat Chrysler has denied wrongdoing in several statements to the media.

Florida Leads in Deaths from Takata Airbags

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) – Florida leads the nation in the number of air bag injuries and deaths.

U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson said May 11 that 83 injuries and three deaths have been linked to Takata air bag ruptures in Florida.

Nelson met with people who have been injured by air bags on May 12 in Orlando.

Nelson says the next highest amount of casualties from air bags were in Puerto Rico, Texas, California and Georgia.

Takata inflators can explode with too much force and blow apart a metal canister, spewing shrapnel.

The Japanese company's defective inflators touched off the largest automotive recall in U.S. history, involving 42 million vehicles and 69 million inflators.

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China’s EV Sales Double in the Month of April

HONG KONG (AP) – Chinese passenger car sales expanded at a faster pace last month as growth in the world’s biggest auto market picked up steam, an industry group said May 11.

Monthly figures from the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers show that passenger cars sales in April rose 11 percent over a year earlier to 1.9 million vehicles, outpacing a 3.5 percent growth rate in March.

Sales of “new-energy vehicles” such as electric cars and gasoline-electric hybrids more than doubled to 82,000.

China’s communist leaders view electric vehicles as key to transforming China into a technological superpower. Global automakers including General Motors, Nissan and Volkswagen unveiled dozens of electric and hybrid vehicles at the Beijing auto show last month.

Recent moves by Beijing to loosen up restrictions on foreign ownership in the auto industry gave priority to the electric vehicle industry. Under the new rules, requirements for foreign car brands to team up with local state-owned partners will be scrapped by 2022, while limits on foreign ownership of electric vehicle producers will be eliminated this year.

The relaxed regulations came amid rising trade tensions between the U.S. and China that might dent U.S. auto imports – Ford vehicles are facing longer waits as Chinese customs agents tighten up inspections. The company said its China sales fell 26 percent in April to 69,503 vehicles.

China’s total vehicle sales, including trucks and buses, rose 11.5 percent to 2.3 million.



2018 Wrangler named Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year by NWAPA.

Jeep, Ram Real ‘Mudders’

FCA SUVs and trucks really do live up to the expression, “getting down and dirty.”

Jeep and Ram Truck brand vehicles cleaned up at the 24th annual “Mudfest” competition hosted by the Northwest Automotive Press Association (NWAPA).

Jeep and Ram won three of the six vehicle categories with the new 2018 Jeep Wrangler taking home top honors, being voted “Northwest Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year” by automotive journalist members of NWAPA, said FCA spokesman Scott Brown.

“Jeep has taken the Wrangler to a new level, adding safety, technology and on-road refinement to its unparalleled off-road prowess. NWAPA members were impressed by the Wrangler’s performance both on and off the road,” said John Vincent, president of NWAPA.

“The 2019 Ram 1500 once again raises the bar for full-size pickup comfort and refinement. It features a cabin that rivals luxury cars, and capability to do any work it is asked.”

In addition to taking overall

top honors, the 2018 Jeep Wrangler was also named the winner of the Compact and Mid-size Utility class and the Extreme Capability class, Brown said.

The new 2019 Ram 1500 Rebel won the Pickups category. Rebel topped a field that included entries from every pickup truck manufacturer in the U.S. market.

“The Jeep Wrangler and the Ram 1500 Rebel have well-earned reputations for capability,” said Mike Manley, head of Jeep & Ram Brands.

“Winning a head-to-head third-party off-road comparison test, such as Mudfest, is clearly yet another strong endorsement for the Jeep and Ram brands.”

More than 25 NWAPA automotive journalists spent two days testing vehicles on paved and off-road routes, Brown said.

Testing took place at The Ridge Motorsports Park in Shelton, Wash. Journalists tested 26 vehicles from 16 manufacturers to select winners in six categories: Subcompact Utility, Compact and Mid-size Utility, Family Utility, Premium Utility, Trucks and Extreme Capability.

Europe Needs EV Stations

MUNICH (AP) – Charging an electric car away from home can be an exercise in uncertainty – hunting for that one lonely station at the back of a rest-area parking lot and hoping it’s working.

In Europe, some of the biggest automakers are out to remove such anxieties from the battery-only driving experience and encourage electric-vehicle sales by building a highway network of fast-charging stations. The idea is to let drivers plug in, charge in minutes instead of hours, and speed off on their way – from Norway to southern Italy and Portugal to Poland.

Much is at stake for the automakers, which include Volkswagen, BMW, Daimler and Ford. Their joint venture, Munich-based Ionity, is pushing to roll out its network in time to service the next generation of battery-only cars coming on the market starting next year. They’re aiming to win back some of the market share for electric luxury car sales lost to Tesla, which has its own, proprietary fast-charging network.

Despite a slower-than-expected start, Ionity CEO Michael Hajesch told *The Associated Press* in an interview he’s “confident” the company will reach its goal of 400 ultra-fast charging stations averaging six charging places each by 2020.

The idea is “to be able to drive long distances with battery electric vehicles, across Europe and to have the same experience at each station, meaning a very easy and comfortable customer journey,” Hajesch said, speaking at the company’s Munich HQ.

The idea is to break electric cars out of the early adopter niche, in which they are charged slowly overnight at home and used for short commutes.

“The sites we are looking for are really the A-sites,” he said, “directly at the autobahn. Not down the road, not driving five kilometers into the next industrial area and finding a charging station somewhere, without light, or any amenities around, but right at the autobahn.

“If you’re going from Hamburg to Munich, because it’s a week-end trip to friends, typically you do not have much time,” he said. So what counts will be “the speed of recharging your vehicles, and at the same time finding maybe some amenities: maybe a coffee, getting a newspaper or whatever.”

Ionity opened its first station April 17 at a rest stop off the A61 highway near the small town of Niederrissen, 50 kilometers (30 miles) south of Bonn in western Germany. The six high-speed chargers are operating in “welcome mode,” meaning they’re free until May 31. After that, Ionity plans to charge for the power,

which it seeks to obtain from renewable sources.

Ionity has agreements for some 300 sites, working with fueling station and rest stop landlords. The average distance between stations will be 120 kilometers (75 miles).

More charging availability is what it will take to get an environmentally aware car buyer like Rainer Hoedt to choose a battery-only vehicle. The 58-year-old Berlin geography teacher is a proud owner of a Mitsubishi Outlander, a plug-in hybrid that combines internal combustion with a battery he can charge overnight. The battery-only range of 50 kilometers (30 miles) lets him drive emissions-free for daily trips at home.

But a family vacation of more than 200 kilometers (120 miles) to the Baltic Sea was a different story.

Hoedt had to drive on internal combustion before finding a lone charging station as he approached his destination, using the goingelectric.de website.

“It was right next to the highway, there was one charging station and we were lucky that it was free,” he said. But he couldn’t find a charging station he could use by the seashore.

On the way back, he was able to charge at a rest stop, but only by asking a non-electric car owner to move his vehicle away from the lone charging pole. A battery-only car might never have made it home. And he couldn’t use one to visit his cousin 650 kilometers (400 miles) away in Rosenheim.

“I looked at the option . . . The infrastructure is still so bad, I just don’t want to risk that I get stranded,” he said. “Once the infrastructure gets better, that might be my next car.”

Tesla has shown how charging infrastructure can drive vehicle sales. It has 1,229 stations with 9,623 fast chargers in Europe alone, where it has cut into Mercedes and BMW’s sales of luxury cars. But it has its own proprietary plug. Ionity is using the CCS plug backed by the European Union as a common standard for all.

In the U.S. and Europe, the situation is roughly similar: More chargers available in jurisdictions where government strongly backs electric vehicles, such as California, Norway or the Netherlands. Elsewhere, chargers can get harder to find for long stretches along rural highways.

VW, which agreed to invest in low-emission driving to settle charges it cheated on diesel emissions, is building 300 highway charging sites in the U.S. by June 2019 through its Electrify America unit. Japan has 40,000 charging points, exceeding its 34,000 gas stations, according to Nissan – but many of those are private garages.

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Public Has a Choice Among Semi-Autonomous Systems

(AP) – Jason Kavanagh is a senior road test engineer at Edmunds. He recently analyzed semi-autonomous systems for *The Associated Press*.

He started by writing that many have heard of Tesla Autopilot, but perhaps not always in a good way: The semi-autonomous driving system is now under investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board for the role it may have played in a March fatal accident near Mountain View, Calif.

But Kavanaugh added that much of the public might not have heard about Cadillac Super Cruise and Nissan ProPilot Assist, two other semi-autonomous driving systems that are available in new cars today. The Tesla, Cadillac and Nissan systems are not exactly the same. And despite a common perception of such technology, none of them allow the car to drive itself.

But these systems can reduce driver fatigue on long trips or ease the tedium of slow-and-go freeway traffic. For new-car shoppers, it's important to know what these systems can – and can't – handle.

Semi-autonomous driving systems essentially combine two existing technologies – traffic-adaptive cruise control and a lane-keeping system – into a more cohesive whole. The cruise control automatically handles the acceleration and braking, while the lane-keeping system makes steering inputs that center the car within its lane.

The adaptive cruise feature can be used by itself in these systems if the driver so desires. Whether or not the self-steering component of these systems is enabled, it's imperative that the driver remain vigilant and attentive at all times.

Tesla's Autopilot is the most well-known semi-autonomous system. It uses cameras and sensors on the front, sides and rear of the car to observe lane markings and to "see" other cars that are nearby. It's simple to engage, requiring only two quick taps of a stalk. There are no limitations on where Autopilot can be used. Drivers can enable it on the freeway, side streets, or anywhere with distinct lane markings.

This freedom has a downside, though: Side streets are never as consistently well-marked as freeways, and the system cannot respond to traffic signals or stop signs.

Autopilot allows for only about 30 seconds of hands-free driving before sounding a reminder to place your hands on the wheel. If one doesn't comply, Autopilot is disabled for the remainder of the drive.

Notably, Tesla can update the

Autopilot software over the air, not necessitating a trip to a service center. As a result, Tesla can quickly send out improvements to Autopilot's functionality or resolve problems with it, such as one Edmunds experienced during a February test drive in a Model 3. During the drive, Autopilot steered the car across the double yellow line into oncoming traffic, requiring the driver's intervention to bring it back into its lane. The problem did not re-occur after a software update.

Cadillac's new Super Cruise system allows complete hands-free driving with no time or distance limit provided the driver meets certain criteria.

Like Autopilot, Super Cruise employs a suite of external sensors and cameras. Then it adds a subsystem in the cabin that makes sure the driver is paying attention: an infrared camera mounted atop the steering column that tracks the driver's eye and head movement.

If one's focus is not on the road ahead and the driver makes no attempt to take the wheel, the system sounds several warnings of increasing urgency until eventually canceling Super Cruise and slowing the car to a gentle halt.

No other semi-autonomous driving system available today has such a sophisticated driver-monitoring system. Super Cruise is somewhat more cumbersome to activate compared to Autopilot and drivers can only use it on certain limited-access freeways that have been approved by engineers from GM, which owns Cadillac. GM updates the database of Super Cruise-compatible freeways regularly.

For now, Super Cruise is available only on the Cadillac CT6 sedan. It's safe to assume it will be deployed on other GM vehicles, but the company hasn't announced any so far.

Nissan's new ProPilot Assist system also is best on freeways with gentle turns and well-marked lanes on both sides. That's the environment Nissan recommends.

While drivers can use the system on side streets, it's not well-suited to those roads. Some curves are too tight for the system to handle at the speed limit, and it will cancel its operation and readily return control to the driver in those situations. Like Autopilot, ProPilot Assist requires the driver's hands to be on the wheel at all times.

On the whole, Nissan's system isn't quite at the level of capability of those by Tesla or Cadillac. Rather than referencing map data on board as the Tesla and Cadillac systems do, ProPilot Assist reacts to its environment in real time.



Van Dyke Across From GM Tech Center



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Police Investigate Latest Telsa Car Crash

SOUTH JORDAN, Utah (AP) – A Utah driver turned on the semi-autonomous functions of her Tesla vehicle and then didn't touch the steering wheel again for 80 seconds before slamming into a firetruck stopped at a red light last week, a summary of data from the car released May 16 showed.

The Tesla Model S crashed into the truck at 60 mph on May 11 apparently without braking before impact, according to police in South Jordan, a suburb of Salt Lake City. The fire department mechanic truck had been stopped at a red light.

The crash comes as federal safety agencies investigate the performance of Tesla's semi-autonomous driving system.

The Tesla's air bags were activated in the crash, South Jordan police Sgt. Samuel Winkler said. The Tesla's driver suffered a broken right ankle, and the driver of the Unified Fire Authority mechanic truck did not require treatment, Winkler said. The driver of a Tesla electric car had the vehicle's semi-autonomous Autopilot mode engaged when she slammed into the back of a Utah fire truck over the weekend, in the latest crash involving a car with self-driving features.

The 28-year-old driver of the car told police in suburban Salt Lake City that she had been looking at her phone before the May 11 evening crash.

Tesla's Autopilot system uses radar, cameras with 360-degree visibility and sensors to detect nearby cars and objects. It's built so cars can automatically change lanes, steer, park and brake to help avoid collisions.

The auto company markets the system as the "future of driving" but warns drivers to remain alert while using Autopilot and not to rely on it to entirely avoid acci-

dents. Police reiterated that warning May 14.

A Tesla spokesperson did not comment following the disclosure about the use of the feature.

On Twitter, co-founder Elon Musk said it was "super messed up" that the incident was garnering public attention, while thousands of accidents involving traditional automobiles "get almost no coverage." There was light rain falling and roads were wet when the crash occurred, police said in a statement.

"Witnesses indicated the Tesla Model S did not brake prior to impact," the statement said.

Tesla's Autopilot system uses cameras, radar and computers to keep speed, change lanes and automatically stop vehicles. The company, which is based in Palo Alto, Calif., and has a huge battery factory in the Reno, Nev., area, tells drivers the system requires them to keep their eyes on the road and their hands on the wheel so they can take control to avoid accidents.

"Tesla has not yet received any data from the car and thus does not know the facts of what occurred, including whether Autopilot was engaged," a Tesla spokesperson said in a statement on May 13.

News of the crash came as a top Tesla official who had been the main technical contact with U.S. safety investigators left the company to join rival Waymo.

Waymo, Google's self-driving car spinoff, confirmed that Matthew Schwall had joined the company.

Schwall had been Tesla's director of field performance engineering, according to his LinkedIn page, which said he served as Tesla's primary technical contact with safety regulatory agencies such as the National Highway Traffic Safety Adminis-

tration and the National Transportation Safety Board.

There was no immediate comment from Tesla about Schwall.

Police said they had been in contact with the National Transportation Safety Board about the crash. NTSB spokesman Keith Holloway said he did not know whether the agency would get involved.

The NTSB and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration are investigating at least two other crashes involving Tesla vehicles. In March, a Tesla Model X SUV crashed on a California highway, killing the driver.

Omaha Police Trade Sedans For SUVs

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) – Omaha police and other law enforcement agencies have been filling their cruiser fleets with bigger, more comfortable sport utility vehicles instead of purchasing more four-door sedans.

The Omaha World-Herald reports that Omaha City Council approved the purchase of 40 Ford Explorer police utility vehicles in February for about \$1.1 million. Another \$1.3 million was approved to install lights, lockers and other equipment.

Omaha police Capt. Edward Reyes said the vehicles should be on the streets in the fall. Officials hope to phase out the roughly 150 remaining Chevrolet Caprice patrol vehicles over time.

Sgt. Justin Smith says officers have a better vantage point in the SUVs. The cars also have more room for equipment.

Douglas and Sarpy County Sheriff's Offices have fleets that are primarily utility vehicles.

Florida Beach Has Jeep Day

DELAND, Fla. (AP) – Volusia County, Fla., was recently ground zero for Jeeps and Jeep lovers, when a special Jeep Beach Day celebration was held.

Now in its 15th year, Jeep Beach Day, held on May 4 this year, is among the largest Jeep-only events in the country, according to organizers. Crowds have grown steadily in recent years, said Rich Byrd, general manager of The Shores Resort & Spa, an event host hotel.

"We fill out four days in a row with them very easily," said Byrd, adding that the hotel expected 1,000 guests for a Jeep Beach banquet one night, up from 850 last year. We're very fortunate to have them here. When they check out, they'll often make reservations for next year."

For the casual Jeep fan, it's hard to know where to begin describing the customized touches on Steve Farrell's Wrangler JK Unlimited, parked on the beach gleaming in the sun on May 4 behind The Shores Resort & Spa in Daytona Beach Shores.

The GT axles? The Teraflex stabilizer? The oversized 37-inch Pro Comp all-terrain tires on custom 20-inch rims? All pretty impressive, until Farrell points to the silver pipe running along the front chassis and then skyward along the edge of the passenger-side windshield.

"That's the snorkel," said Farrell, among the thousands of Jeep loyalists in Volusia County recently for the annual Jeep Beach, a popular four-wheel celebration in April. "I've got everything you can put on a Jeep, basically, and still drive it every day."

Jeep Beach activities included an obstacle course at Daytona International Speedway, followed by a concert by country singer Caroline Jones in the Speedway's fan zone. It also offered a nice

cruise for Jeeps along the Ormond Scenic Loop and Trail.

For Farrell and his snorkel-equipped Wrangler, possibilities extend beyond the road.

"Without the snorkel, if I get in water this deep, the engine shuts off," Farrell said, pointing to a spot along the fender. "With the snorkel on it, I've had it in water this deep," he said, pointing about midway up the windshield.

The owner of several construction-related companies in New Port Richey, Farrell made his first visit to Jeep Beach last year and enjoyed it enough to return.

"It's just a good, relaxing time," Farrell said. "We've got probably 50 of us from over there."

Despite his Jeep's capabilities, he didn't tackle the event's obstacle course.

"I don't want to get my Jeep dirty," he said.

A few yards away along the row of roughly a dozen Jeeps parked in the sand, Tampa resident Jason St. Croix, 43, also had returned for his second Jeep Beach, with about 20 family members and friends along.

"I like it because you can do family stuff with the Jeeps, meet new people and talk about your Jeep," said St. Croix, who works at a title company. He and his wife and 9-year-old daughter arrived in the family's shiny black 2012 Jeep Wrangler Sahara Limited, equipped with comfortable seating and an array of extras including touchscreen radio.

"I bought it used and I didn't even know what I was getting into," St. Croix said. "All I cared about was how the outside would look when I put rims on it and lifted it."

A few blocks north of the hotel at Pappas Plaza, Jeeps filled many parking spaces in front of Mike's Galley, which touts "the best breakfast in town."



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Chevrolet Seeks Budding Baseball Writers

Extra, extra, read all about it – GM is looking for young baseball fans who might want to be journalists.

Chevrolet is seeking entries for its kid reporter competition, a PLAY BALL initiative in conjunction with Major League Baseball, that gives two winners an opportunity to interview top talent at the 2018 MLB All-Star Game presented by Mastercard this July in Washington, D.C., said GM spokeswoman Afaf Farah.

The competition is a national search for children 8-14 years old who are passionate about sports and interested in reporting. Does your son or daughter have what it takes? Chevrolet makes it simple to enter at www.chevybaseball.com

Here's what's required:

- Kids must submit a 30-60 second video that shows off their on-camera skills by May 31.
- Video should showcase interview questions and knowledge of MLB stars. Be creative and fun.
- Judging will be based on on-camera presence, baseball passion & clarity/enunciation.

Chevrolet will select two winners from the submissions. Each reporter will win a trip for four to Washington, D.C., to attend the Midsummer Classic and will have



Chevy has been a partner with Major League Baseball since 2005.

a chance to interview players and coaches during MLB's All-Star Media Day, Farah said.

Chevrolet is the Official Vehicle of Major League Baseball and the Official Automotive Sponsor of the PLAY BALL initiative to support America's national pastime. PLAY BALL is a collective effort to encourage young people and communities to participate in baseball- or softball-related activities, including formal leagues, events and casual forms of play.

In addition to the initiative, Chevrolet continues its long-standing investment in youth

sports into 2018 with Chevy Youth Baseball.

From 2006 to 2017, Chevrolet reached more than 6.7 million kids through its youth baseball programs.

The automotive brand has donated more than 136,000 equipment kits to youth baseball initiatives and held more than 1,637 free public clinics across the country in partnership with local Chevrolet dealers.

Kid Reporters have until Thursday, May 31, to submit their entries to be considered for the competition.

State Looking at Changing Workforce Ed

LANSING, Mich. (AP) – Dakota Carter was 4 years old when he found his calling inside his grandfather's garage.

He often hung around there to watch his grandfather doctor up the never-ending crawl of ailing cars in his makeshift auto repair shop. One day, Carter began helping and discovered he had a knack for fixing things, too.

"It seems easy because I can take it apart and put it back together until it works," Carter, now 19, said. "It's just the way my brain works. The more hands on, the better."

Carter recently handed in his last exam as a student at Charlotte High School and began working full-time as a mechanic at DuroTech Automotive in Potterville. He credits much of his success to his school's "Early Middle College," a program that allowed him to take technical classes at Lansing Community College and stay on a fifth year as a co-op student at DuroTech in lieu of traditional coursework.

Career pathways like Carter's might soon become more popular in Michigan. The term-limited Gov. Rick Snyder is making talent development his final priority through a proposal titled the "Marshall Plan for Talent."

The strategy, which Snyder has been circling the state to promote, aims to fund \$100 million in scholarships, career counseling, teacher grants and career-oriented programs within high schools. Its end goal is to sustain collaboration between the education and business sectors – namely for jobs in professional trade, information technology

and other high-demand fields.

"Employers and educators need to keep talking to each other," Snyder said during a visit to Big Rapids last month. "Let's revolutionize education so learning is a lifelong achievement of knowledge and success."

Simmering beneath this push for talent is the recent sting from Amazon passing over Detroit in the company's ongoing search for a second headquarters. The Seattle-based corporate giant in January snubbed Michigan's low corporate tax rate as well as the swaths of empty land in the Motor City and Grand Rapids in favor of 20 other cities.

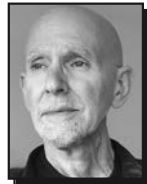
Many believed the decision was anchored to Michigan's steadily deflating talent pool after the Great Recession – a lesson learned for the future, said Roger Curtis, director of the Michigan Department of Talent and Economic Development.

"There will be another one that's going to be the size and scope of Amazon," said Curtis, who is spearheading Snyder's Marshall Plan. "We need to be better prepared from a talent standpoint to show that company, whoever it is, that, 'Yes, you can come to Michigan.'"

Once the epicenter of a blossoming automotive and manufacturing industry, Michigan has yet to rebound from a financial crisis a decade ago that contributed to Detroit's filing for the U.S.'s largest municipal bankruptcy. Jobs are trickling back to the state, although much of Michigan's workforce remains ill-equipped to veer from the traditional industrial job path.

But according to numbers from the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget, the state will have more than 800,000 career openings by 2024. Snyder's Marshall Plan hinges on the philosophy that filling those spots requires thinking outside the typical career trajectory of a K-12 education followed by a two- or four-year degree.

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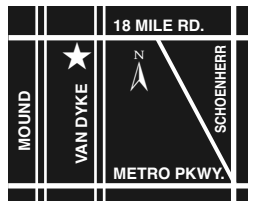
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Nissan Execs Report Slight Drop in Sales

TOKYO (AP) – Nissan Motor Co.’s profit fell 32 percent in the last quarter from a year earlier as a strong yen, rising raw materials costs and research expenses bit into earnings, the Japanese automaker reported May 14.

Nissan’s January-March profit was 168.8 billion yen (\$1.5 billion), down from 249 billion yen last year. Quarterly sales fell 0.9 percent to \$31.3 billion.

Nissan said some losses for the fiscal year through March, such as costs from production halts in Japan due to illegal inspections that surfaced last year, have now ended.

Its results were also hit by class-action lawsuits in the U.S. over defective air bags made by supplier Takata Corp. Those are not expected to continue in this fiscal year either.

Nissan’s full-year profit rose 12.6 percent to \$6.8 billion, helped by U.S. tax reforms and relatively solid global vehicle sales, according to the Yokohama-based maker of the March subcompact, Leaf electric car and Infiniti luxury models.

Nissan, allied with Renault SA of France, is expecting global vehicle sales to grow this fiscal year to 5.925 million vehicles.

Its global vehicle sales for the fiscal year through March reached a record 5.77 million vehicles, up 2.6 percent on-year.

By region, vehicle sales rose in Japan, despite the inspections scandal and production halts. Sales also grew in North America, where the Rogue sport-utility vehicle was popular, Nissan Chief Executive Hiroto Saikawa told reporters. Nissan’s alliance with Renault, was set up in 1999, when Nissan was on the verge of bankruptcy.

Ford Volunteers Give Helping Hand in Houston

Nine months after the devastation caused by Hurricane Harvey, Ford Motor Company is reinforcing its commitment to the Houston community and continuing its support of ongoing recovery efforts in southeast Texas.

Ford employees, Houston-area Ford dealers and local nonprofits gathered at Houston Food Bank on May 11 for a “Texas Is Family” community event that marks the donation of 38 Ford vehicles to eight organizations in the state, said Ford spokesman Alvaro Cabal. Vehicles will be used to enhance ongoing relief efforts by delivering food, mental health and medical services, as well as items such as diapers, personal hygiene kits, bug spray, cleaning supplies and coolers.

Some vehicles will serve as first responder rescue and evacuation vehicles for future emergencies, Cabal said.

The Texas Is Family event was meant to demonstrate Ford’s strong connections in the Houston community and brings together many of the nonprofits the company has been working with since recovery efforts began last August, Cabal said. Nonprofits participating in the event and their activities:

- Houston Food Bank is moving its emergency food pantry outside to serve as a pop-up food pantry for designated clients; Ford employee volunteers are working to facilitate the pantry and assist clients.
- The Salvation Army is providing beverages from its canteen – the vehicle used in disasters to serve first responders – as well as information about the services it offers.
- American Red Cross is providing information about

long-term recovery efforts in Texas and distributing materials related to its home fire campaign; with hurricane season beginning June 1, the organization is also distributing hurricane and flooding preparedness checklists.

- First Book is hosting a pop-up library for representatives from up to 20 local schools to come pick up books and supplies for their teachers; Ford employee volunteers are assisting school officials in selecting and packing books.

“Ford is the best in Texas because of our longstanding commitment to being a good neighbor, strengthening communities and helping make people’s lives better – in good times and in times of need,” said Jim Vella, president, Ford Fund, the philanthropic arm of Ford Motor Company.

“We want to thank all of our employees, dealers and nonprofit partners who stepped up when the people of Houston needed them most. As another hurricane season approaches, we stand strong in our pledge to continue to help families and communities get back on their feet.”

Along with Houston Food Bank, American Red Cross and The Salvation Army, nonprofits receiving vehicle donations from Ford on May 11 included Team Rubicon, ToolBank, Catholic Charities, San Antonio Food Bank and North Texas Food Bank, Cabal said. The vehicle donations were part of a commitment Ford Motor Company and Houston-area dealers made in September to raise \$3.5 million to support relief efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey.

Ford has provided a special Texas Is Family assistance bundle to more than 8,000 customers



Ford employees helping unload supplies going to help hurricane victims.

who lost or had vehicles destroyed in the disaster, Cabal said. This offer included the same no-haggle, below-invoice price Ford employees and their families receive, as well as payment deferrals. More than 1,500 first responders in hurricane-affected areas have received a special \$1,000 discount (in addition to all available incentives) on the purchase of a new Ford or Lincoln vehicle.

Ford has a long history of supporting disaster relief in the United States and around the world, Vella said.

In 2016, Ford implemented its first Disaster Relief Mobility Challenge, providing grants that enabled three nonprofits to purchase a custom Ford Transit cargo or passenger van to support their unique disaster response needs. The recipients – Team Rubicon, ToolBank and Catholic Charities – all received their vehi-

cles last summer and also used them to support Hurricane Harvey relief.

Houston is one of 26 markets in the United States and Puerto Rico where Ford and its dealers have expanded their commitment to meet community needs by collaborating on programs and nonprofit outreach, Vella said.

The initiative, known as Operation Better World, was launched in 2008. Program outreach in Houston includes Ford Driving Dreams educational program, which has donated 20,000 books to children in need and awarded more than \$200,000 in scholarships to 100 high school students in the area over the past two years. On May 11, Ford Driving Dreams awarded another \$100,000 in scholarships to a new group of 50 students – marking the third consecutive year Ford Fund and Houston-area Ford dealers helped local students.

Martinrea Prepares for the Future with Tech Center

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

stations. The building even boasts a winding slide connecting the second and first floors.

“We’re excited about the synergies that will result from having all business units and functional areas represented under one roof with state-of-the-art lab space attached to the office,” said D’Eramo. “In addition, our new location ensures prime visibility by our customers and partners in the automotive space.”

The building project was supported by a \$420,000 performance-based grant from the state of Michigan and an eight-year property tax abatement valued at \$852,000 from the city of Auburn Hills, Wildeboer said.

D’Eramo said that Martinrea is a young company. It only got its start back in Toronto in the year 2001.

“As we mature as a company and move to what we like to call Martinrea 2.0, it’s been evident that we needed to invest a lot of money into research and development to provide the unique products our customers need. To make that investment, we needed a place where our excellent talent could get together in the backyard of the home of our customers.”

While Martinrea is known for its metal casting, in both steel and aluminum, the company also does research in fluid dynamics and module construction, Wildeboer said.

“We’ve worked hard to create an atmosphere in the tech center that will foster innovation,” Wildeboer said. “But innovation doesn’t begin and end at the new tech center. We have 44 facilities around the world, and we want to foster the spirit of innovation in all those facilities.

“That’s why one of the things we do here at the tech center in Auburn Hills is work on the



Rob Wildeboer

process of manufacturing. If you are going to be in a continuous state of innovation, then it is vital to have the people who actually put the parts together, who cast the metal parts, involved in the process. So we bring those people here.”

By including the production people in the R&D and design side of things, Martinrea is able to better able to innovate and remain a nimble supplier in an ever-changing automotive environment.

“It’s pretty simple when you break things down,” Wildeboer said. “To remain an auto supplier, you have to make money. To make money, you have to adapt to the times. To adapt to the times, you have to collaborate with your customers – the automobile manufacturers – and with the people in your different departments. To collaborate, you need a place where everyone can come together in a state-of-the-art environment.”

So Martinrea built the tech center in Auburn Hills. It has space for the design and testing of new products and it’s close to the company’s biggest customers.

“When you break it down, it is pretty simple,” Wildeboer said.

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