



# POWERLine



"Published for the people of GM Toledo / UAW Local 14"

## PAYROLL MESSAGE REMINDER

It has come to our attention that Citizens Bank changed its routing number. Employees who had direct deposits set up received paper checks which were mailed last Thursday and will receive at least one more paper check before direct deposit is enabled. These employees should have received letters from the bank regarding this change.

**All employees affected by the Citizens Bank routing number change will need to submit a new direct deposit request form which are available in the Financial and Personnel departments.** Any employee that has an issue with overdraft because of automatic withdrawals will need to contact the bank and not GM. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

## ERT Members Wanted

GM Toledo Transmission is currently seeking Emergency Response Team Members on 2nd and 3rd Shifts.

All interested employees should contact Assistant Fire Chief Ray Frost, Kurt Swade, Fire Chief Dean Miller or their UAW committee person.

## Chevrolet Volt Electric Vehicle Gets a Bath

It's the question many people ask about an electric vehicle: What happens if the battery gets wet? Chevrolet Volt battery engineers answered that recently by putting the Volt through a bath at the Milford Proving Ground.

"The reason we've done all this testing is to verify and ensure the customer is protected from any potential water intrusion into the battery which could affect the electronics," said Rob Drexler, a Volt battery development engineer.



Earlier this week, Chevrolet announced the Volt would come with a standard eight-year, 100,000-mile warranty.

The Volt has a range of about 340 miles and is powered with electricity at all times. For up to the first 40 miles, the Volt is powered solely by electricity stored in its 16-kWh lithium-ion battery, using no fuel and producing no emissions. When the Volt's lithium-ion battery runs low, an engine/generator seamlessly operates to extend the driving range another 300 miles on a full tank of gas.

## Notice of Changes to Alexis Road Parking

**Effective July 26, 2010:** in an effort to free up additional parking spaces and provide preferred parking for employees driving GM vehicles, the green line painted on the Alexis Road parking lot (which indicates where non-GM vehicle parking is permitted) has been painted over. Designated parking for all non-GM vehicles has been moved to the fenced area at the east end of the lot. Signs will denote the area as being "non-GM vehicle parking."

As an added attempt to free up additional spaces for GM employees, contract employees are expected to park in the Jackman Road parking lot.

## Competitive Connection It's Official: Buyers Downsized

As Americans emerge from recession, they are buying much different vehicles than they did before the crash: smaller, more fuel-efficient, less ostentatious. A major shift has taken place since 2007, the last of the boom years and the finale of the rosy period preceding two years of turmoil that began with a spike in fuel prices early in 2008. Compared with consumers in the first half of 2007, Americans now are buying:

- More cars, fewer trucks and smaller vehicles in general
- Smaller and less expensive cars within segments
- Ordinary rides that replace bigger or more luxurious vehicles

"We've got people trading Lexuses for Camrys," said Ernie Sims, executive vice president of Al Hendrickson Toyota in Coconut Creek, Fla. "Buyers are much more cautious, more rational." Still, as they go down in size, buyers aren't necessarily sacrificing equipment.

Even within the mid-sized car segment, consumers are shifting down. The pricier end of the category, which includes the Chrysler 300 and Nissan Maxima, has lost share since 2007, while the gains were concentrated among less expensive models such as the Hyundai Sonata and Nissan Altima.

But consumers are not necessarily choosing cheaper vehicles. Transaction prices are rising. Equipment levels and technology content are higher in even the smallest models, manufacturers say.

Source — Automotive News — July 12, 2010

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# Pickups emerging as leaders in quality

## Improved reliability has broadened appeal of workhorse vehicles



On a list of today's best-built vehicles, you might expect to find a sleek Mercedes sedan or an iconic Porsche convertible. Even a fuel-sipping minivan from Toyota -- despite the automaker's recent troubles with recalls. But a pickup? Probably not.

Yet these workhorses are now among the highest-quality vehicles on the road, earning better marks in key quality studies than many cars, including some luxury models.

Leading the way are American brands, determined to keep their Japanese rivals at bay. In the latest J.D. Power and Associates' initial quality rankings, pickups widened their lead over other light vehicles for 2010 models: Problems per 100 vehicles reported during the first three months of ownership totaled 95, compared with the industry average of 109. Leading the pack were General Motors' Chevrolet Avalanche and GMC Sierra.

At stake is more than just bragging rights: Even amid the worst industry downturn in decades, Detroit's Big Three sold more than 1 million of the 1.14 million full-size pickups bought in the United States last year, underscoring how critical the truck market is to domestic automakers.

"Pickups likely will remain in the forefront of quality because they are profitable vehicles automakers can't afford to lose," said Mike Levine, editor of PickupTrucks.com in Santa Monica, Calif., an editorial site devoted to coverage of the pickup industry.

Today's pickup buyers are finding fewer problems because buyers demanded and got more creature comforts and Detroit's automakers drew a line in the sand vowing not to relinquish the quintessentially American segment to the Japanese.

"Pickups used to lag," said Dave Sargent, vice president of global vehicle research for J.D. Power in Troy. "Now they're pretty much the highest-quality vehicles. Twenty years ago, the pickup was essentially a work tool with no focus on the interior at all, only whether it was washable and could you fit a bunch of guys in there."

The pickup segment is unique in that Detroit-made pickups collectively score better than average, while the Japanese entries fall below the median. In many other segments, imports are the quality leaders.

The best of the best in the large pickup class, the Avalanche and Sierra, tied for the fewest problems with 81, followed by the Ford F-150 at 85.

Quality engenders loyalty, said Rick Spina, GM line executive for trucks. "Happy customers don't move. It is up to the Big Three to not disappoint," he said. "It has been one of the strongest stands, one of the only spots where key Japanese competitors made a good hard run at it and have not been successful."

### Higher quality expected

Along with plush options such as leather seating and infotainment systems -- and bigger cabs making them family vehicles -- came buyers' expectations of higher quality.

"I think it will last," Sargent said of trucks' improved quality. "It is an incredibly competitive segment."

"It was clearly a shot across the bow in exterior styling to say 'Look at me,'" GM's Spina said, and exterior styling has been high on customers' lists ever since.

### Tundra was potential threat

Toyota's foray into the U.S. truck market put the Americans on notice. The Japanese automaker introduced the Tundra in 1999 and while the original truck was smaller and not competitive, Toyota's reputation for continual improvement made it a potential future threat.

Nissan used the 2003 Detroit auto show to unveil the more competitive Titan, setting an ambitious sales goal of 100,000. Toyota and Nissan, combined, accounted for fewer than 100,000 U.S. sales last year. Ford and GM sell that many in a month. The scare made the domestics even better.

Sargent noted, "When you have Toyota entering a segment, it turns the heat up on the quality side. But the domestics have been improving faster than the imports and they dominate that segment." Source -- Detroit News -- July 6, 2010

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## ASSEMBLY UPDATE

### RWD:

Total Build Schedule:	11010
Total Actual Build:	11275
Production Conformance:	96.9%
Next Week's Daily Build:	2202

### 6F6:

Total Build Schedule:	1106
Total Actual Build:	1108
Production Conformance:	96.7%
Next Week's Daily Build:	298