



General Motors engineers fit structural modifications to further protect the battery pack of the Chevrolet Volt. The structural enhancements will more evenly distribute crash energy, GM says.

## GM Further Protects Volt Battery Due to Problem

by Gerald Scott  
News Dept.

General Motors last week took a major proactive step in preserving the safety integrity of the 2011 North American Car of the Year, the Chevrolet Volt.

The Volt, of course, has been held in question by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), which cited a problem with the Volt's battery pack late in 2011.

As such, GM last week announced enhancements to the vehicle structure and battery coolant system in the Chevrolet Volt that would further protect the battery from the possibility of an electrical fire occurring days or weeks after a severe crash.

The enhancements come in response to a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Preliminary Evaluation to examine post-severe crash battery performance.

NHTSA opened its Preliminary Evaluation on Nov. 25 following a severe-impact lab test on a battery pack that resulted in an electrical fire six days later. The test was conducted to reproduce a coolant leak that occurred in a full-scale vehicle crash test last May that resulted in an electrical fire three weeks later.

The Volt is a Top Safety Pick by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and has earned other safety awards from key third-party organizations.

GM pointed out that through the first 11 months of 2011, Volt owners accumulated nearly 20 million miles without an incident similar to the results in the NHTSA tests.

"The Volt has always been safe to drive. Now, we will go the extra mile to ensure our customers' peace of mind in the days and weeks following a severe crash," said Mary Barra, GM senior vice president of Global Product Development.

GM will conduct a Customer Satisfaction Program to further protect the Volt battery from the possibility of an electrical fire occurring days or weeks after a severe side crash. Modifications will:

- Strengthen an existing portion of the Volt's vehicle safety structure to further protect the battery pack in a severe side collision.

- Add a sensor in the reservoir of the battery coolant system to monitor coolant levels.

- Add a tamper-resistant bracket to the top of the battery coolant reservoir to help prevent potential coolant overflow.

GM conducted four suc-

cessful crash tests between Dec. 9 and 21 of Volts with the structural enhancement. The enhancement performed as intended. There was no intrusion into the battery pack and no coolant leakage in any of the tests.

"These enhancements and modifications will address the concerns raised by the severe crash tests," Barra said. "There are no changes to the Volt battery pack or cell chemistry as a result of these actions. We have tested the Volt's battery system for more than 285,000 hours, or 25 years, of operation. We're as confident as ever that the cell design is among the safest on the market."

Volt customers will be individually notified when the modifications are available for their vehicles. The enhancements are being incorporated into the Volt manufacturing process as production resumes this month.

"We're focused on one thing right now: doing what's right by our customers," said GM North America President Mark Reuss. "We'll live up to our commitment to make sure our customers are delighted with their purchase."

Vehicle electrification technologies are important to the future of the automotive industry, which is why GM will continue its leadership role in helping the Society of Automotive Engineers develop standards that will help tow truck operators, salvage yards and others.

## Life of Steve Jobs Will Live Long in Auto Industry

by Gerald Scott  
News Dept.

Although he died back in October at age 56, Steve Jobs, both globally and locally, continues to live on and on.

The Cult of Steve, if you will, took hold soon after Jobs' death as Apple computer stores around the globe held candlelight vigils – something usually reserved for statesmen and rock stars, and not "businessmen."

Jobs, of course, was no ordinary businessman because he captured "lightning in a bottle" up to a half-dozen times or more in his busy and wildly successful career (the original Apple, Macintosh, Pixar, iPod, iPad and the variations of iPhone).

The funeral service at Apple headquarters in California in his memory drew concerts from pop music A listers Norah Jones and Coldplay.

In San Francisco, they lined up to see the BBC documentary, "Billion Dollar Hippy," about Jobs' mercurial career.

The post-death Walter Isaacson biography zoomed to the top of the book charts. Even in Romania, Graphisoft, the largest software company in that small country, immediately erected a flattering statue of Jobs in stride. You get the idea.

Locally, we caught up with retired GM designer Ron Williams, long an admirer of Jobs, well before Jobs' death.

"When he came out with his first Macintosh, I was living in California at the time – that was in 1983," Williams recalled. "I was out in California and I was happy. It's a real incubator for 'idea people,' more so than here."

"His work ethic was only matched by his desire to win, he was pretty neat stuff," Williams said.

"He's the high-bred of all cultures past, (he belonged with) all these great innovators like Einstein, Howard Hughes, Da Vinci, okay, Op-

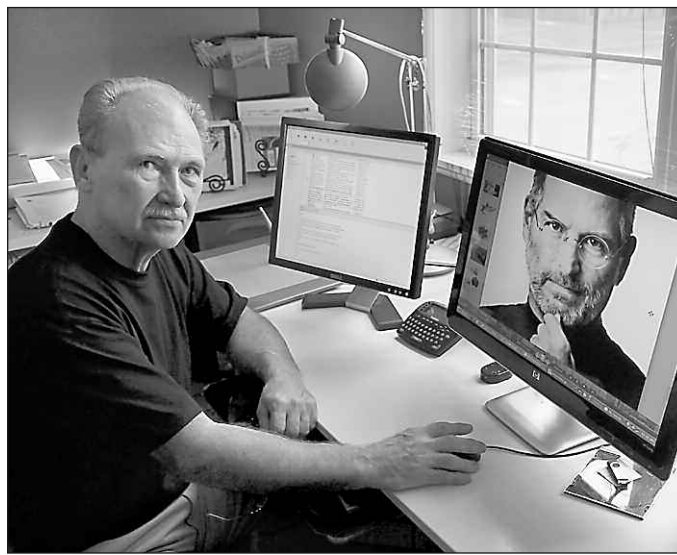


PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

penheimer. All these great thinkers.

"He took this wonderful knowledge – it was just his destiny. What Steve Jobs created was a whole new way of living and communicating – making it user-friendly, serviceable, making a product that had impeccable integrity.

"From not just what it was designed to do, but all the way down through marketing, sales and service. The guy was dedicated."

Williams pointed out that computer mogul Ross Perot helped fund Jobs' effort with Next Computer – Perot believed in Jobs enough to loan him \$20 million just for that venture.

One way or another, Jobs seemed to be a magnet for attracting successful products, as well as successful supporting people around him.

"He had this vision, this clarity. He was the insider driving the industry," Williams said.

"Bill Gates was a very crafty businessman, but the thing is, having this vision and being in a position to 'steer,' he was this great facilitator of recog-

nizing hired talent . . . being the director of all this activity. That, combined with being an incredible salesman, a good spokesperson.

"When he introduced the McIntosh at the Super Bowl (in 1984), with that incredible commercial that was so avant garde, it was groundbreaking."

Likewise, David J. Dronzkowski, vice chair, Math & Science K-12, SAE Detroit Section Operations Board and Powertrain Research and Advanced Engineering, Ford Motor Company, had some interesting observations about Jobs on his SAE blog recently.

"Jobs embraced technology but not technology for technology's sake," he wrote. "He also had a fundamental understanding of people. He had an ability to understand not just what wanted to be done with technology but how it should be done."

"Ever the perfectionist, Jobs seamlessly integrated Art with Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math to generate products that were as beautiful as they were capable and



The cult of personality surrounding Apple's Steve Jobs has only exploded since his death last October. Here, Graphisoft, the largest software firm in Romania, erected this statue in Jobs' honor and memory recently.

reliable. Doing this generated an emotional response between users and technology that was never there before."

## Art Van Hosts Popular Designer

WARREN – Popular interior designer Jeff Lewis will make a guest appearance at Art Van Furniture in Novi this week. Lewis will appear at the Art Van Furniture Novi store from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 12.

Known for his real estate investments, interior design expertise, and personality, Lewis will offer tips and answer questions that will help Art Van Furniture guests create the homes of their dreams.

Having developed some of the most coveted homes in the Los Angeles area, Lewis has earned the title of America's most well-known house flipper from his starring role in Bravo's docu-series, "Flipping Out." Jeff will also star in

the upcoming Bravo series, "Interior Therapy with Jeff Lewis," where he will move in with his clients to help them improve their lives both inside and out.

"We are so excited to have Mr. Lewis as our guest expert," said Diane Charles, Art Van Furniture director of Corporate Communications.

"His talent, charm and unfiltered personality will make this a very special event."

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