

GM Italy Center Captures Energy, Returns It to Use

TORINO, Italy – As visitors to the General Motors Powertrain Engineering Center in Torino walk the halls, they can often hear the whirring of engines being tested. But what they can't hear is the excess energy being transferred back to the grid.

Within a year, the center has harvested 300,000 kilowatt hours of energy from test benches – equipment that tests various measures of a running engine.

This excess energy would normally be lost to the atmosphere. Now GM captures it to power all of the facility's computers.

"Energy efficiency represents an important component of GM's global production," said Pierpaolo Antonioli, managing director of the General Motors Powertrain Engineering Center.

"This initiative helps us operate our facility at its energy-efficient best on a daily basis, thanks to the ingenuity of our team and recent investment in our facility."

The plant runs 15 test benches, with five more on the way, as engineers design fuel-efficient engines for Chevrolet and Opel.

The idea to put the excess energy to better use fell in line with the company's global sustainability goals.

GM's Pontiac (Mich.) Engineering Center also sends en-

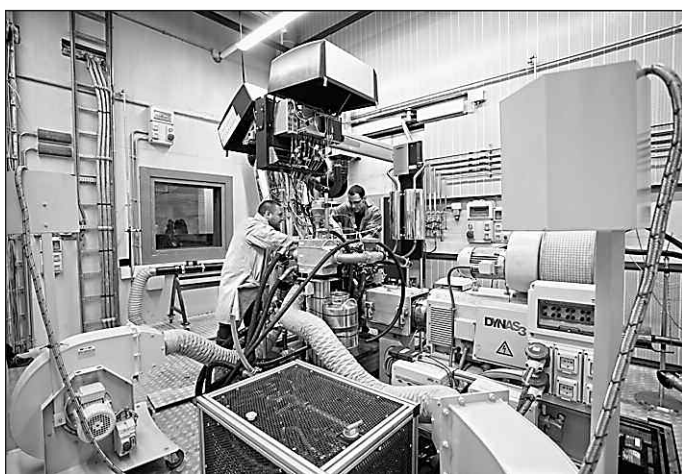


Engineers at GM's Powertrain Engineering Center in Torino, Italy, monitor engine testing.

ergy from engine testing back to the grid. Since 2008, it has regenerated more than 26.7 million kilowatt hours of energy to power internal processes.

This is the equivalent of the electricity consumed by 2,326 U.S. households in one year. Generally speaking, just as GM vehicles are capturing electricity through regenerative braking, so, too, are GM plants copying the same idea.

For more information on GM's environmental commitment, visit its sustainability report and environmental blog.



The excess energy produced by engine testing powers the plant.

GM to Transfer Europe Logistics To Peugeot Citroen's Gefco Arm

DETROIT/PARIS/RUSSELS-HEIM – As a first result of its global alliance, GM and PSA Peugeot Citroen have reached a long-term, exclusive agreement to transfer the majority of GM's logistics business in Europe to Gefco, a wholly-owned subsidiary of PSA Peugeot Citroen and established leader in automotive and industrial logistics in Europe and beyond.

The agreement will impact the majority of the Opel/Vauxhall, Chevrolet and Cadillac logistics activities in Europe (including Russia) and includes services such as material and component deliveries to manufacturing plants, delivery of finished vehicles to dealerships and the transport of aftersales spare parts to distribution centers.

This agreement represents one of the largest logistics agreements in the European automotive industry to date. It allows GM to gain cost savings and focus its internal resources more on GM's core automotive business.

Steve Girsky, GM vice chairman, said: "This marks the first step in realizing benefits from the larger alliance with PSA. This logistics agreement will bring operational efficiency and cost savings to GM and allow us to fully utilize the proven expertise of Gefco."

Philippe Varin, chairman of the Managing Board of PSA Peugeot Citroen, added: "This agreement is the first step in our long-term strategic alliance with GM."

It enables Gefco to continue its strategy of broadening its existing client base and growing its global business operations."

The new logistics agreement between GM and Gefco will take effect in 2013.

On Feb. 29, GM and PSA Peugeot Citroen announced a broad-scale global strategic alliance that will leverage the combined strengths and capabilities of the two companies, contribute to the profitability of both partners and strongly improve their competitiveness in Europe, they say.

Consumer Confidence in Housing Market Shows Gradual Strength

WASHINGTON (AP) – Americans signed more contracts to buy previously occupied homes in May, matching the fastest pace in two years. The increase suggests consumers are gaining confidence in the housing market and a modest recovery will continue.

The National Association of Realtors said last week that its index of sales agreements increased to 101.1 last month from 95.5 in April. That matches March's reading, the highest since April 2010, when a home-buying tax credit boosted sales.

A reading of 100 is considered healthy. The index is 13.3 percent higher than it was a year ago. It bottomed at 75.88 in June 2010, after the tax credit expired.

The increase supports other data showing steady improvement in the housing market this year, even as hiring slumps and consumer confidence sags.

Sales of new and previously occupied homes are up over the 12 months. Builders are starting more projects. And prices are rising in most markets.

"Despite the gloom in much of the recent economic data, housing continues to show real signs of life," said Ian Shepherdson, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics.

The economy benefits when home sales rise. Buyers typically spend more on renovations, furniture, appliances and landscaping.

There's also a psychological factor. In good times, most homes rise in value. When homes appreciate, people feel they have more money. So

they spend more. Consumer spending drives roughly 70 percent of economic activity.

It typically takes one to two months for buyers to close on a home after signing a contract. So the increase in signed contracts suggests completed home sales will rise this summer. That could drive prices higher and encourage more people to put homes on the market.

Home prices increased in 19 of 20 major U.S. cities in April from March, according to the Standard & Poor's/Case-Shiller index, released last week. A measure of national prices rose 1.3 percent in April, the first increase in seven months.

Still, sales remain far below healthy levels. Analysts say it could be years before the housing market returns to full health.

One reason prices are rising is the supply of homes for sale remains extremely low. The inventory of previously occupied homes for sale is back down to levels last seen in 2006. And there were 145,000 new homes for sale in May, just 1,000 higher than in April, which was the lowest supply on records dating back to 1963.

The realtors group cautioned that sales could slow if more people don't list their homes.

The limited inventory should spur more home building, the realtors group said. If housing starts don't increase, the limited supply could drive up prices.

In May, contract signings increased in all regions.

The largest rise was in the West.

Retired Dentist Sells Off Premier Car Collection

SARANAC, Mich. (AP) – Dr. Elroy Kidle gently brushes his hand along the cowl of his rare 1914 Cadillac Landaulet Coupe, parked next to his equally rare 1905 REO Runabout.

Kidle is in the twilight years of his long love affair with old fine old cars. He was especially fond of REOs that were built in nearby Lansing until the mid-1930s.

"The reason I'm getting rid of them is because I can't drive them anymore," says the 83-year-old retired dentist as he pauses in the paneled garage behind his house that's decorated with photographs and advertisements of automotive brands that are now extinct.

The gleaming red Runabout – one of the oldest REOs known to exist – has already been sold. Kidle says he will deliver it to the new owner this summer.

"It's going to a gentleman in New York, it's going to be in a museum," says Kidle, who rescued the car from a barn in Benkelman, Neb., and had it restored to showroom condition. "I sold it to him two years ago and told him he could have it in the next five years."

Earlier this year, Kidle sold a 1914 REO to a fellow dentist and member of the REO Club of America. Next on his list is the stately Cadillac that Kidle

has been restoring since he bought it 20 years ago.

The Cadillac was originally purchased by John and Mary Phillips, a wealthy Jackson family with 10 children, he says.

With room for three, the Cadillac was purchased for Mary Phillips to drive. After her death, it was stored by one of their daughters in a barn in Dowagiac, where its wooden subframe rotted beneath its aluminum body until Kidle rescued it.

them. Those are aluminum hand-formed bodies that were actually done by the two Fisher Brothers that started Fisher Body," says Sturim, who worked on the drivetrain and helped Kidle find the craftsmen to rebuild the car.

"As far as we're aware, the car has never been outside the state of Michigan," says Sturim, whose shop is filled with restoration projects. One of his projects recently set a new speed record for vintage cars.

On the wall of his garage, Kidle has hung a photograph of Theodore Roosevelt riding in a 1907 REO on a visit.

Over the years, Kidle has hired craftsmen to replace the wooden subframe and hand-form key parts of its aluminum body. He's also restored the original four-cylinder engine and chassis.

Steve Sturim, owner of Steve's Antique Auto Repair in Wyoming, says Kidle's coupe is one of only three known to still exist and one of only 50 made in 1913.

The Landaulets were known as "tulip cars" because of the unique shape of their bodies, Sturim says.

"There are no flat panels on

Sturim says he admires Kidle's passion for finding and restoring old cars. "He loves his REOs and he loves his old cars," he says. "His passion has taken him all over the country touring in these vehicles."

Kidle enjoys showing off the car's unique features – a three-piece windshield, a built-in tire pump, an internal wiring system that travels through the doors and the unique steering column and seating arrangement that accommodated the 4-foot, 9-inch-tall Mary Phillips.

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