

Bitter Cold Blows in New Records for OnStar RemoteLink

The Polar Vortex over most of eastern North America sent outdoor and coolant temperatures plummeting during most of January.

For residents of the affected regions, that meant doing something as simple as driving to work could be a cold chore.

But GM offers a service that allows drivers to get warm without having to wait for their cars to warm up while driving, said Annalisa Bluhm, spokesperson for the Chevy Cruze, Sonic and Spark.

Cruze owners with OnStar's RemoteLink Mobile application were able to avoid some of the chill because they could check their car's status and warm the interior from any distance, said Bluhm. And GM's records show that drivers took advantage of the service.

RemoteLink, Bluhm said, set single-day and single-hour request records last month.

And, on the day of Jan. 7, up-

wards of 200,000 requests were sent through the mobile application across all General Motors' brands, setting a one-day record.

Later in the month, when the frigid air returned, the single-hour record was set on Jan. 28 with more than 20,000 requests. Cruze owners used the app more than any owners of any other GM vehicle did.

For all of January, Chevrolet owners made 2,909,674 requests through the app. Of that total traffic, 1,603,107 – or about 55 percent of – requests were for remote start.

The vehicle stays locked after a remote start, so it is secure, even when in a public space. A key in the ignition turn is required for the vehicle to move.

More than 15 percent of RemoteLink requests were to check the car's vehicle data, such as tire pressure or oil life, said OnStar Infotainment spokesman Stuart Fowle.

Owners of Volt extended-range electric vehicles asked different questions, such as how the frigid temperatures affected charging levels.

Existing RemoteLink users were just part of the record month, Fowle said. Historically, most customers download the RemoteLink app to their smartphones in January.

This January saw more downloads than any previous January on record.

"Chevrolet, paired with the RemoteLink app available through OnStar, offers one of the most winter-weather-ready lineups of any manufacturer," said Philip M. Abram, GM chief infotainment officer.

Remote start is available on most Chevrolets with automatic transmissions and is a part of the free RemoteLink Key Fob service for 2014 and newer model year vehicles, Bluhm said.

On-demand vehicle diagnostic information and the ability to



RemoteLink smartphone app

send directions from your phone to your vehicle requires an active OnStar subscription.

TRW Honored for Quality at Two Europe Facilities

TRW Automotive Holdings Corp. was recently awarded the Volvo Cars Quality Through Excellence (VQE) Award at two of its manufacturing facilities in Europe, said TRW spokesman John Wilkerson.

The facilities are TRW Automotive s.r.o. in Nove Mesto, Slovakia, where electrically powered steering motors and belt drive steering systems are produced, and TRW Automotive GmbH in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, that manufactures electrically powered hydraulic steering systems and hydraulic rack-and-pinion steering gears.

"We are pleased that two of our European steering facilities have earned this prestigious quality award and are regarded by Volvo Cars as valued partners and among the best suppliers in the business. TRW looks forward to continuously improving its manufacturing expertise in support of Volvo Car's strategic journey," said Maciej Gwozdz, TRW vice president, Operations, European Steering.

The VQE Award is based on a set of quality and manufacturing disciplines that ensure a supplier's success and drive a supplier's continual improvement. The TRW sites fulfilled all of Volvo Cars VQE requirements, including 11 award performance elements and a customer endorsement.

GM Foundation Donates \$1M to Three Detroit Charities

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through their significant personal donations, and we wanted to honor their commitment through these grants."

Of the \$1 million, the Capuchin Soup Kitchen will receive \$500,000 to feed Detroit's citizens and tend to their basic needs.

Habitat for Humanity Detroit will receive \$400,000 toward both refurbishing and building new homes in Detroit, and COTS will receive \$100,000 to continue to provide services to the homeless to foster self-sufficiency.

GM Foundation President Vivian Pickard presented the checks to each organization last week. In addition, team GM Cares Volunteers worked a shift in each facility, serving meals and preparing clothing contributions for the homeless, as well as framing houses for neighborhoods in Detroit.

"We are extremely grateful for the incredibly generous support the Akersons have provided the Capuchin Soup Kitchen during their years in Detroit," said Brother Jerry Smith, executive director of the organization.

"Now we are awed and humbled to receive this large gift from the GM Foundation in their honor. We wish Dan and Karin Godspeed as they journey into

this next chapter of their lives. We will miss them."

During Akerson's tenure with GM, he and his wife became well known for their philanthropy. Shortly after arriving in Detroit, the Akersons chaired the Karmanos Cancer Institute Annual Dinner, raising more than \$868,000. They then chaired the 40th Annual Capuchin "SOCK" dinner, personally donating \$250,000 and raising a record \$1 million for the organization.

Additionally, as a 40th anniversary gift to each other, the Akersons donated \$1 million to Habitat for Humanity Detroit to benefit the Morningside Community and kick off the "Leaders to Re-Build Detroit" campaign.

Akerson also sent his 1958 Corvette to auction, raising \$270,000 for the Habitat affiliate. In 2013, the Akersons received the "Sponsor of the Year Award" from Habitat for Humanity of Michigan, which also renamed the award in their honor.

"Once again, the GM Foundation overwhelms us with its generosity," said Vincent Tilford, who is executive director for

Habitat for Humanity Detroit.

"This contribution will enable us to continue to build homes, community and hope for hard-working families. Dan and Karin Akerson are true champions for Detroit and we are honored to be awarded this gift as part of their legacy."

COTS' CEO Cheryl P. Johnson said, "This gift comes at a critical time for our agency. COTS is in a very important transition as we begin to shift more focus to serving families."

"I know from my time spent with Dan Akerson that this work will honor his legacy, as he is

such an incredibly family-centered individual.

"We are grateful to Dan and to the General Motors Foundation for making this investment in our community to help build self-sufficiency and poverty-resistant children."

After serving as GM chairman and CEO for more than three years, Akerson retired on Jan. 15.

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