

Reuss talked about the future of GM's Detroit-Hamtramck facility and how it will be a major producer of the company's upcoming electric vehicles.

### Ram 1500 Truck Earns Luxury Car of Year

When is a pickup truck a luxury vehicle? When it's the 2020 Ram 1500 Longhorn and Limited. Cars.com has just named the Ram 1500 its 2020 Luxury Car of the Year.

The Ram 1500 Longhorn and Limited editions were chosen after the editors of Cars.com looked for a vehicle that represents ultimate luxury in its class, is exceptionally well-rounded and demonstrates outstanding usability and drivability, said FCA spokesman Trevor Dorchie.

This is the first time a truck has won the Luxury Car of the Year award from Cars.com, Dorchie said.

When describing why they chose the Ram 1500 Longhorn and Limited as luxury car of the year, Cars.com editors wrote: "awards belong to products that raise the bar, and whenever we asked ourselves which luxury vehicles had wowed us in the past year, discussions led exclusively to something that was unlikely – some would say scandalous – in its model, its brand, its very body style.

"But if you've been in the new Ram 1500 in its Laramie Longhorn or Limited trim levels, you'll undoubtedly be nodding your head right now in agreement. While the latest Ram 1500 received some powertrain and suspension updates, the interior

## GM Invests \$2.2B in Detroit - Hamtramck Plant Retooling

When GM approved its latest labor agreement with the UAW late last year, the company said that it had plans for the Detroit-Hamtramck assembly plant.

Those plans have now been unveiled. General Motors' vision of an all-electric future is coming into clearer focus and gaining momentum with a \$2.2 billion investment at its Detroit-Hamtramck assembly plant to produce a variety of all-electric trucks and SUVs, said GM spokesman Dan Flores.

GM's first all-electric truck will be a pickup with production scheduled to begin in late 2021. This will be followed soon after by the Cruise Origin, a shared, electric, self-driving vehicle unveiled by Cruise in San Francisco in late January, said Flores. De-

troit-Hamtramck will be GM's first fully-dedicated electric vehicle assembly plant.

"Through this investment, GM is taking a big step forward in making our vision of an all-electric future a reality," said GM President Mark Reuss during a press event at the plant with Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and other local and state officials. "Our electric pickup will be the first of multiple electric truck variants we will build at Detroit-

Hamtramck over the next few years."

When the plant is fully operational, this investment will create more than 2,200 good-paying U.S. manufacturing jobs, Reuss said.

GM will also invest an additional \$800 million in supplier tooling and other projects related to the launch of the new electric trucks.

Since the fall of 2018, GM has committed to invest more than \$2.5 billion in Michigan to bring electric vehicles to market

through investments at Orion assembly, GM battery lab in Warren, Brownstown and now this direct investment in Detroit-Hamtramck, Flores said.

The plant's paint and body shops and general assembly area will receive comprehensive upgrades, including new machines, conveyors, controls and tooling.

GM's joint venture with LG Chem – which is investing \$2.3

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## Trump Signs New Trade Agreement, Visits Warren

WARREN, Mich. (AP) – President Donald Trump visit a Michigan automotive supply factory to tout a new North American trade agreement.

He toured and gave remarks at the Dana Inc. facility in the Detroit suburb of Warren on Jan. 30, a day after he held a signing ceremony for the U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade deal in Washington. The deal to modernize the North American Free Trade Agreement passed on bipartisan votes in Congress, scoring the president a political victory amid his Senate impeachment trial.

Mexico has already ratified the agreement. Canada must act next for it to fully enter into force.

The visit was Trump's second to Michigan in about six weeks. He held a re-election campaign rally in Battle Creek in December.

Dana is headquartered in Maumee, Ohio. Its 800,000-square-foot plant in Warren employs more than 800 people and

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## Rivian Will Build Lincoln Brand's First Fully-Electric Vehicle

Lincoln and Rivian are working together to develop a new electric vehicle previously announced as part of Ford Motor Company's original investment in Rivian.

Lincoln Motor Company's first fully electric vehicle will join the Aviator and Corsair Grand Touring plug-in hybrid vehicles, further solidifying Lincoln's commitment to electrification, said Lincoln spokeswoman Angie Kozleski.

The zero-emissions vehicle will feature connected and intuitive technologies designed to create an effortless experience for Lincoln clients, said Kozleski.

"Working with Rivian marks a pivotal point for Lincoln as we move toward a future that includes fully electric vehicles," said Lincoln Motor Company President Joy Falotico. "This vehicle will take Quiet Flight to a new place – zero emissions, effortless performance and connected and intuitive technology. It's going to be stunning."

Lincoln has introduced four new SUVs including Corsair, Aviator and Navigator in the past three years, Kozleski said. The new lineup has helped Lincoln's global SUV sales grow 7 percent year-over-year and enabled the luxury automaker to deliver its best U.S. SUV sales in 16 years.

As Lincoln adds a new luxury electric vehicle to its lineup, production of the MKZ sedan will end this year in order for the Hermosillo Assembly Plant in Mexi-

co to prepare for production of new Ford vehicles.

The Lincoln battery electric vehicle will be built off of Rivian's flexible skateboard platform and is part of Ford Motor Company's planned equity investment in Rivian.

This new vehicle also is part of Ford's previously announced investment of more than \$11.5 billion into electrification, which includes the Mustang Mach-E and a fully electric version of the best-selling F-150 pickup, Kozleski said.

"Our vehicle development partnership with Ford is an excit-

ing opportunity to pair our technology with Lincoln's vision for innovation and refinement. We are proud to collaborate on Lincoln's first fully electric vehicle," said Rivian founder RJ Scaringe.

Ford's relationship with Rivian got a boost in April of 2019 when the automaker invested \$500 million in Rivian.

In addition to the investment, the companies agreed to work together to develop an all-new, next-generation battery electric vehicle for Ford's growing EV portfolio using Rivian's skateboard platform.

"This strategic partnership

marks another key milestone in our drive to accelerate the transition to sustainable mobility," said Scaringe, Rivian CEO at the time of the Ford investment. "Ford has a long-standing commitment to sustainability, with Bill Ford being one of the industry's earliest advocates, and we are excited to use our technology to get more electric vehicles on the road."

Ford officials said in April of 2019 that the company intends to develop a new vehicle using Rivian's flexible skateboard platform. This is in addition to Ford's

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With the help of the company Rivian, Lincoln is going forward and building a zero-emissions vehicle.





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# GM's New Brake Technology Shortens Stopping Distance

Shorter is better when you're talking about braking distances. So GM has that covered with its eBoost braking sysystem. The GM advanced trailer braking concept that has the potential to dramatically reduce stopping distances – in fact, it allows a truck and trailer to stop in the same distance as a truck by itself at its gross vehicle weight rating. The system is under development because GM is committed to not only great capability for customers who tow, but also advancing technologies that benefit customer confidence, said Tim Herrick, vice president of Global Product Programs. This is done using existing components, including GM's segment-exclusive eBoost braking system. Herrick said that GM has established its towing leadership with a class-leading eight available cameras with up to 15 different camera views when trailering, an industry-first trailer label that shows exactly what weight that specific truck can tow, and iN-Command from ASA Electronics compatibility available on the 2020 Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra light-duty and heavy-duty models. "The industry tends to focus on the big towing claim, but the overall towing experience is just as important and every hill climb has a hill to descend on the other

side," said Herrick. "GM revolutionized the towing space with our industry-exclusive technology available on our full-size pickups, and this advanced trailer braking technology is yet another example of GM's leadership and a hint at what's possible in the future." Utilizing the truck's eBoost braking system, GM engineers integrated a trailer with a similar eBoost system and upgraded hardware components such as brake rotors, calipers and tires, Herrick said. With eBoost systems on both the truck and trailer and proper software to enable communication, the stopping distance of a

truck and trailer improved by up to 20 percent from 60 mph to zero when compared to an identical truck and trailer using traditional electric trailer brakes – that's about a 40-foot difference. This pioneering technology allowed the truck to command trailer braking like never before, using the existing seven-pin trailer wire connector and without the need for any extra connections, Herrick said. The advanced trailer braking also helps mitigate trailer sway by using stability control. While Chevrolet and GMC trucks on the road today potentially have the components necessary to make this concept a re-

ality, no trailers exist with the same capability. This preview of the concept is intended to inspire technology partners needed to make the benefits a reality for truck and trailer owners in the future. "GM continues to partner with organizations like North America Trailer Manufacturers and Recreational Vehicle Industry Association on making trailering more confident for everyone, and GM is committed to setting a new industry standard that will enable technologies like this in the future as we work towards our vision of zero crashes, zero emissions, zero congestion," Herrick said.



This shows how GM's advanced concept brake system shortens stopping distances of trucks towing big loads.

# Survey Confirms Employers Like LTU Grads

A new survey from American Society of Employers (ASE) named Lawrence Technological University (LTU) in the top five universities where Michigan companies recruit new graduates, said Matt Roush, director of Media Relations for LTU. The "2020 Starting Salaries for Co-op Students and Recent College Graduates Survey" was released Wednesday by the ASE, a Livonia-based nonprofit that provides HR services to businesses. The survey of 121 businesses, 80 percent of which are in the Detroit area, listed Lawrence Tech in the top five of campuses recruited, along four much larger state-supported schools. The ASE survey found the top three most popular technical bachelor's degree disciplines hired in the past year were mechanical engineering, electrical engineering, and computer science, Roush said. The top three non-technical disciplines hired in the past year were supply chain management, business administration, and finance, which tied with human resources and labor relations. Topping the pay list for those disciplines was computer science, at \$71,581 a year for recent graduates, followed by electrical engineering, \$70,236, mechanical engineering, \$67,600, business administration, \$65,597, supply chain management, \$63,589, HR and labor relations, \$59,975, and finance, \$59,142. In the survey, 77 percent of respondents said their company has hired, or plans to hire, a recent college graduate in 2020, three percentage points higher than in 2019. Most survey respondents were small businesses.

# FCA Seeks Dismissal of Lawsuit Filed by General Motors

by TOM KRISHER  
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) – Fiat Chrysler is moving to dismiss a racketeering lawsuit filed by rival General Motors, denying allegations that it bribed union officials to impose higher labor costs on GM. In papers filed Jan. 24 with the federal court in Detroit, FCA argued that GM's lawsuit is not based on facts. It also argued that even if the illegal acts GM alleges were true, a four-year statute of limitations on them has expired. GM alleges in the lawsuit filed last November that Fiat Chrysler bribed officials of the United Auto Workers Union to saddle GM with higher costs in an effort to force GM to merge with the smaller FCA. GM's unprecedented lawsuit against a Detroit rival alleges that FCA was involved in racketeering by paying millions in bribes to get concessions and gain advantages in three labor agreements with the union, a charge Fiat Chrysler disputed. "FCA denies that it either directed or approved any alleged prohibited payments," the company said in its motion. GM alleges that Fiat Chrysler corrupted the bargaining process with the UAW in the 2009, 2011 and 2015 union contracts to gain advantages over General Motors. The allegations stem from a long-running federal probe into Fiat Chrysler bribing UAW officials through a union-company training center that has implicated top union officials. Ten people with ties to the UAW have been charged in the probe; eight have pleaded guilty, including the widow of a union vice president. Three people who worked at Fiat Chrysler have been convicted. "FCA was the clear sponsor of pervasive wrongdoing, paying millions of dollars in bribes to obtain concessions" from the union, GM General Counsel Craig Glidden said when the lawsuit was filed. But Fiat Chrysler said in its motion to dismiss that in order to prove racketeering, GM has to show that FCA somehow took over the union and made it do illegal acts, which it did not do.

Also, Fiat Chrysler contends that GM failed to show that FCA's activities caused GM to be harmed, a requirement of the racketeering law. GM's claim that FCA sought to force a merger by making concessions to the UAW during the 2015 contract talks, then sticking GM with those terms in pattern bargaining, are wrong because the concessions hurt Fiat Chrysler, the motion said. "This theory defies economic logic and concededly did not depend upon the alleged prohibited payments," the Fiat Chrysler motion said. GM also accused Fiat Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne, who died last year, of authorizing bribes worth more than \$1.5 mil-

lion to union officials in the scheme. The higher labor costs were designed to force GM to merge with FCA, which had rejected Marchionne's offer to combine the companies, the lawsuit stated. But GM, according to FCA, did not have a theory about why FCA would have had to bribe the union to accept a favorable contract, or why Marchionne would want to stick both companies with higher labor costs "if his ultimate goal was to run the merged company (presumably on a profitable basis)," the motion stated. In a statement, GM called the motion a predictable tactic, and said the company will respond in court.

"We are confident in the legal and factual underpinnings of our case," the statement went on to state. Legal experts have said that motions in the case will continue for several months before a judge rules on the motion to dismiss.

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# GM Invests \$2.2B for Electric Autos

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billion to manufacture battery cells in Lordstown, Ohio – will supply battery cells for the electric vehicles manufactured at Detroit-Hamtramck, Flores said.

“The support from the state of Michigan was a key element in making this investment possible,” said Reuss. “This investment helps ensure that Michigan will remain at the epicenter of the global automotive industry as we continue our journey to an electrified future.”

Detroit-Hamtramck currently operates on one shift of production and builds the Cadillac CT6 and the Chevrolet Impala. Approximately 900 people are employed at the plant.

As previously confirmed, the plant will be idled for several months beginning at the end of February as the renovations begin.

The plant has built more than 4 million vehicles since opening in 1985. Hourly employees at Detroit-Hamtramck are represented by UAW Local 22.

The history of the plant dates back to the 1980s, Flores said. The first vehicle produced at Detroit-Hamtramck (D-HAM) for sale – a Cadillac Eldorado – came off the end of the line at 12:05

p.m. on Feb. 4, 1985. Since then, more than four million cars have been built.

D-HAM has been recognized for environmental stewardship due to efforts such as the solar array, storm-water retention ponds that can power various operations and a 16.5-acre wildlife habitat conservation area. D-HAM uses 3D printing technology for certain tooling on the assembly line.

In addition to being a major GM assembly plant, one of the state’s largest ground-mounted

solar arrays (in partnership with a local utility company) sits on D-HAM’s property, generating 10 percent of the plant’s fixed demand, Flores said.

And a 16.5-acre wildlife habitat conservation area has received recognition and certification from the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC).

Overall, the facility covers 4.1 million square feet over 365 acres that are spread across land found in both the city of Detroit and the city of Hamtramck, Flores said.

## ‘Right to Recall’ Will Guide Who’s Hired at Retooled Plant

by Jim Stickford

GM’s recent announcement that the company’s GM Automation vehicle named Origin is going into production is good news for the folks who work at the GM Detroit-Hamtramck assembly plant.

GM spokesman Dan Flores said that the plant will be used to make the company’s next generation of EV vehicles as well as the AV Origin.

“We will cease production of the last two models – the Cadillac CT6 and the Chevy Impala – being assembled at Detroit-Ham-

tramck by the end of this month,” Flores said. “And once production ends, we will immediately begin retooling the plant so that we can start making our next-generation EV truck. We expect production of the truck to begin in late 2021.”

Flores said that details about the EV truck will be released to the public at a later date, but that it is part of GM’s efforts to create zero crashes, zero emissions and zero congestion vehicles in the future.

Ultimately, once everything is up and running at the retooled Detroit-Hamtramck facility, GM



The Detroit-Hamtramck plant will be a center of GM’s EV manufacturing.

will be employing about 2,200 people there.

“Currently, we have about 800 hourly and 100 salaried people working at the plant,” Flores said. “The 2,200-person workforce will include employees with ‘recall rights,’ meaning they are being recalled back to work at the plant. Then there will be people who have been laid off at other locations and people we might have to hire to fill the spots. We don’t know the numbers for employment currently, but the hiring practices for the retooled plant will be deter-

mined by our contract with the UAW.”

Flores said that GM plans on building the EV truck by the end of 2021. Company officials haven’t set a timeline for building the AV Origin.

“That vehicle is currently being tested in San Francisco,” Flores said. “We want to make sure that the technology really works before we go into production, so we don’t know how long the testing process will take place. Once we are satisfied with the testing results, we will then come up with a production timetable.”



Cars.com editors liked how the redesigned Ram 1500 Limited caught the eye with smooth lines and color.

## Ram 1500 Truck Earns Luxury Car of Year

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of these top trims is nothing short of stunning. Lower-trim models like the Tradesman and Laramie are pretty good, too, but once you get into the luxury trims, the world changes: Luxurious real leather abounds.

“Genuine open-pore wood adorns surfaces you regularly see and touch. Creative stitching holds it all together. Unique color combinations move well beyond the black, gray and beige seen everywhere else. You can get the urban-styled Limited with a blue interior, believe it or not, while the Western-themed Laramie Longhorn can be had in an eye-popping two-tone mix with filigree stitching and simulated alligator-patterned leather that’s classy and sure to appeal to vast swaths of the country.”

“This award validates Ram’s unrelenting efforts to deliver more comfort, refinement and value to our customers,” said Reid Bigland, head of Ram Brand. “The Ram 1500 Longhorn and Limited are examples of how we deliver the most luxurious pickups in the industry. It is immensely satisfying to have Cars.com recognize the Ram 1500 as Luxury Car of the Year.”



Judges praised the Ram 1500 Laramie’s interior for a quality feel.

According to the Cars.com press release announcing this year’s winner, “any model vehicle, regardless of when it was introduced or last updated, is eligible for the award. Along with general excellence, we favor vehicles that represent ultimate luxury in their class and/or are exceptionally well-rounded, providing their luxury along with above-average usability and drivability.”

“The 2020 Ram 1500 Longhorn and Limited trims,” said Jenni Newman, editor-in-chief of Cars.com., “stand out from the crowd thanks to their stunning interiors with premium wood, leather, metal and chrome finishes, an awe-inspiring multimedia system and outstanding ride

quality. The Ram 1500’s top trim levels are stunning and well-deserving of Cars.com’s Luxury Vehicle of the Year award.”

For 2020, a new V6 EcoDiesel joins the Ram 1500 lineup and brings with it best-in-class diesel torque with 480 lb.-ft. and diesel towing capability of 12,560 pounds, Dorchie said. The 2020 Ram 1500 EcoDiesel also leads all trucks in fuel range, he said. Paired with an available 33-gallon fuel tank, Ram’s driving range exceeds 1,000 miles.

Ram’s class-leading ride and handling, said Dorchie, is accomplished via a segment-exclusive link-coil rear suspension system with optional Active-level four-corner air suspension.

## Trump Signs New Trade Deal, Visits Warren Auto Parts Site

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manufactures axle and driveline tubes, housings and assemblies for automobiles.

While at the facility President Trump promised Thursday “to make sure we do everything we can” to shield Christian Iraqi immigrants from deportation.

The president’s promise came during a half-hour speech to workers at the factory.

“Today, we’re finally ending the NAFTA nightmare,” Trump said in a ceremony on the South Lawn Jan. 29. The event featured hundreds of business and farm leaders from around the country and scores of Republican officials. No Democrats were invited to attend the event.

As is his custom, Trump touched on a number of topics within a short time, particularly his price over the new trade agreement between the United States, Mexico and Canada.

Trump said renegotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement was “probably the No. 1 reason that I decided to lead this crazy life that I’m leading right now.”

Trade experts say the impact of the new U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement will be modest. Canada and Mexico already represent the top two export markets for U.S. goods.

The independent U.S. International Trade Commission last year calculated that the deal would add 0.35 percent, or \$68 billion, to economic growth and generate 176,000 jobs over six years. That’s not much of a change for a \$22 trillion economy with 152 million nonfarm jobs.

“It’s a blip,” said Syracuse University economist Mary Lovely, who studies international trade at the school.

“The main thing is what it isn’t:

It isn’t a continuation of uncertainty, and it isn’t a major disruption” to business.

The new pact, along with the signing of a “phase one” agreement with China, dials down trade tensions that have contributed to slowing economic growth globally.

While at the Warren plant, Trump spoke of discussions he had aboard Air Force One on Jan. 30 with U.S. Rep. John Moorenar, a Republican who represents a central Michigan district.

He said Moorenar told him “how rough it has been” for Michigan’s “wonderful Iraqi community.”

He said he recognized the dangers Christian Iraqi immigrants would face if deported back to the land of their birth. “It’s a very tough time for a lot of Christians all over the world,” Trump remarked.

“We’re going to make sure we do everything we can to keep people who have been good to this country out of harm’s way,” Trump said of offering visa extensions to the immigrants.

He left unclear, however, who would be eligible to remain in the United States.

A Trump executive order barring admission into the U.S. of nationals from seven nations, including Iraq, had triggered immigration raids in June 2017 that placed about 1,400 Iraqis into immigration detention. Moorenar and U.S. Rep. Andy Levin, a Democrat who represents a suburban Detroit district, have introduced legislation to block the deportations.

“The president’s words inspire me with cautious optimism, but let me be extremely clear — relief must be extended to all Iraqi nationals who would face danger if they are deported against their will,” Levin said Jan. 30.

## Ford, Rivian Join Up to Build New EV

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

existing plans to develop a portfolio of battery electric vehicles. The Rivian deal was part of a larger announced \$11 billion EV investment by Ford, said Ford spokeswoman Jennifer Flake.

The company has also confirmed two key fully electric

vehicles – a Mustang-inspired crossover that will be coming in later in 2020 as well as a zero-emissions version of the best-selling F-150 pickup.

Rivian remains an independent company, Flake said. Joe Hinrichs, Ford’s president of Automotive, has joined Rivian’s seven-member board as part of the deal.



FCA's New Uconnect 5 Leader in Automotive Digital World

FCA's new Uconnect 5 Global Platform is the most advanced Uconnect System ever, said FCA spokesman Nick Cappa – powerful, personalized, connected and easy to use, which is valuable to drivers and passengers in this world of smartphones and tablets.

The Uconnect experience is expanding its functionality outside of the vehicle itself. The new Uconnect 5 is more connected, helpful, content-rich and adds greater personalization, said Cappa.

With future growth in mind, the advanced Uconnect 5 architecture is now scalable across all FCA brands and preps for the integration of advanced technology. Additionally, Uconnect 5's Android operating system lays a foundation, bringing access to a broad catalog of applications to answer the rapidly developing demand for an improved user experience (UX).

Personalization is one of the attractive features related to consumer products and the Android operating system has created a nearly infinite landscape of opportunity, Cappa said.

Desirable for both novice and experts alike, the all-new Uconnect 5 features several fully customizable interfaces storing up to five different user profiles, said Cappa. Each customer can build his/her own profile, featuring preferences for music and vehicle operation.

The system also connects vehicle-side systems to a driver's profile, such as temperature, seating position and mirror placement. Switching between user profiles is simple and can be handled by a single touch.

UX is a significant reason for purchase and Uconnect 5 responds by providing an easy-to-use, intuitive and personalized experience for every customer, Cappa said.

The UX design team worked hand-in-hand with the interior, color and material design teams to seamlessly integrate the new technology into each vehicle, he said, and make appropriate use of the three available screen styles – portrait, square and landscape.

To integrate screens inside the vehicle, UX designers created detailed backdrops to match interior colors and themes.

Screen graphics are specific to brand and even vehicle trim level. Surface integration also plays a role and coordinates with the surrounding interior materials.

Care is taken, said Cappa, with screen edges, location, angle and depth for proper viewing.

The new Uconnect 5 allows users to create an exclusive home screen with a familiar feel. Similar to specific icon placement on a mobile phone or computer, customers can personalize the Uconnect home screen with frequently used features for quick and easy access, featuring one-touch operation, Cappa said.

Uconnect 5 introduces a new, card-based format that allows display screens to be personalized, simplified and grouped by individual needs and interests while delivering a cleaner, fresher look, he said.

With multiple cards, the user can access the available features and determine how and where they are displayed. Once inside a card, information and icons can be accessed in no more than two button pushes, Cappa said.

The Uconnect performance up-

grade starts with hardware. The system processing power, reaction speed and memory have been enhanced to take advantage of the new Android operating system.

The Atlantis architecture replaces Powernet as the next generation of FCA core in-vehicle electronics communication. In combination with an upgraded 50K MIP chip, 6GB of RAM and up to 64GB of flash memory, the all-new Uconnect 5, said Cappa, delivers operating speeds that are five times faster when compared to the previous generation.

Faster processing speeds, an advanced electrical architecture and more memory give the new Uconnect its lightning-quick response to touchscreen input, Cappa said.

Additional outputs enable up to four displays in the vehicle. Screens are available in a variety of aspect ratios, standard, landscape and portrait, offering more flexibility in packaging and design across all FCA brands. The new Uconnect 5 also represents the most screen area ever offered in an FCA product at up to 12.3 inches.

With the Uconnect skill for Alexa, customers with Alexa-enabled devices at home can easily ask Alexa to start the car, lock/unlock doors and more. Uconnect 5 brings Amazon Alexa directly into the vehicle itself, giving occupants the freedom to interact with Alexa just as they do at home or on a personal device.

The new Uconnect 5 adds exclusive features to the overall system and select features to specific vehicles for the first time with voice recognition available on all product lines.

Uconnect 5 features a new voice recognition engine with software, microphone technology and natural voice capability.

Cappa said statements that would normally be only understood in human-to-human conversation can now be used to communicate with the navigation system – such as "Find an available EV charging station near me."

The advanced voice control system also improves its listening ability in high background noise situations, such as a rolled-down window or rain hitting the windshield.

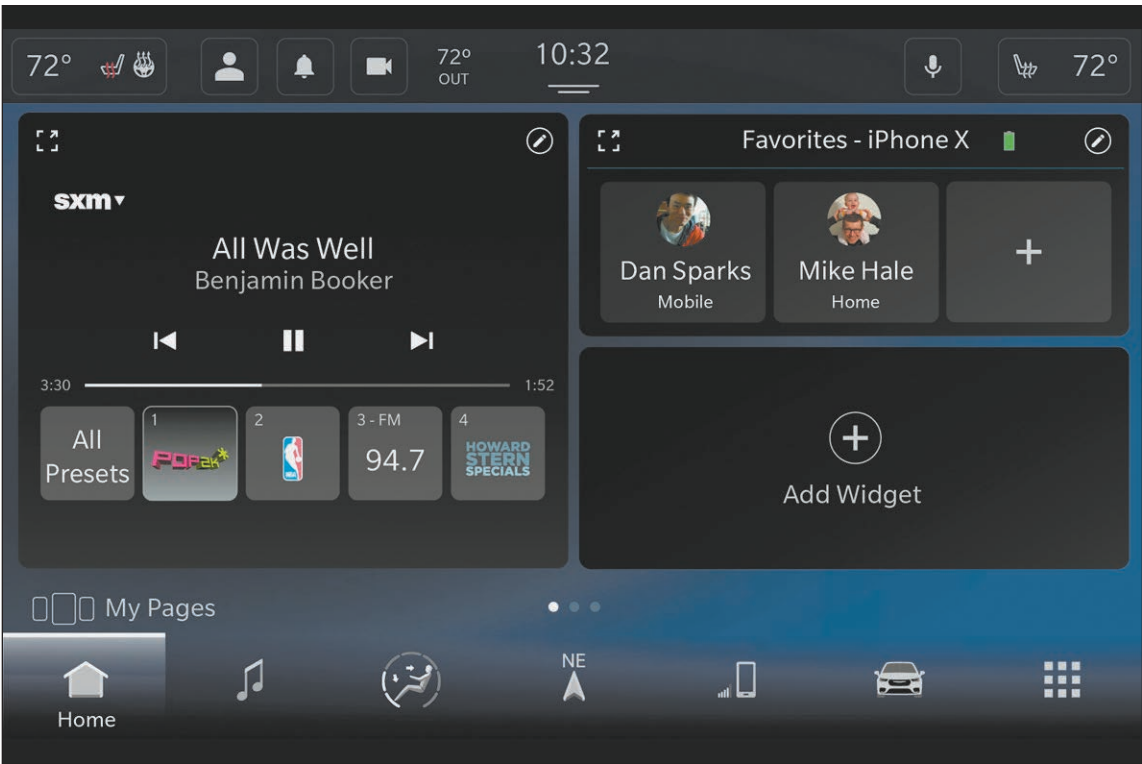
The new Uconnect 5 features the ability to connect two Bluetooth phones simultaneously. This addresses many users who carry multiple phones or for passenger interaction with the Uconnect system along with the driver, Cappa said.

Uconnect's new advanced navigation is an intuitive built-in solution from TomTom navigation, integrating the latest technology. The Uconnect built-in navigation now includes TomTom's traffic, EV and connected services, giving drivers the latest information for a safer and smoother journey.

Similar to personal devices, One-Box-Search makes it easy and intuitive to find a destination (search by voice or text).

Unlike personal devices, even without internet connectivity, search and guidance continue to work with the system simply switching to offline map data, Cappa said.

Guidance is enhanced with the best possible routing, featuring the ability to add a destination along your route and an ETA that offers alternative routes with time extensions. Destination Pre-



FCA's upgrade of the company's Uconnect system builds on past success to create better connectivity.

diction enables the system to learn when it is time to prompt the driver with guidance toward one of the user-saved favorite places.

The built-in navigation links vehicle systems to the route, accomplishing what phone navigation systems cannot.

By 2022, FCA will offer more than 30 nameplates with electrified powertrains, half of which are plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV) or battery-electric vehicles (BEV), creating the need for charging stations to be integrated with the maps, Cappa said.

Multi-lane guidance provides specific lane information and detailed turns to help navigate through complicated intersections and on/off ramps, highlighting the suggested route well ahead of commanded guidance. Uconnect projects this information, as well as speed camera, traffic and hazard warnings to the vehicle's cluster screen, Cappa said.

Uconnect 5 uses a cloud-based platform to power connectivity and deliver a full array of services, including the Uconnect Market in-vehicle commerce platform, Cappa said.

With the new platform, FCA owners will be able to skip lines and save time by ordering (and paying for) food and beverages, reserve a table on the way to their favorite restaurant or locate

and securely authorize pump-and-pay fuel at participating locations.

Drivers can also locate and pay for nearby parking and schedule service appointments at FCA dealerships, all while in the vehicle without having to reach for a physical credit card.

Uconnect's history began with phone integration and has continued to evolve. With the available Uconnect app, you can use your smartphone to start your engine, lock or unlock your vehicle or receive a notification, Cappa said.

Inside the vehicle, SOS Call provides external assistance at the touch of a button.

The Uconnect digital platform has become a significant reason for purchase, tailored for each brand, vehicle and region, Cappa said. FCA research has shown that 51 percent of new-car buyers consider in-vehicle technology as part of their purchase.

Also, 64 percent of customers reported their technology experience made them more likely to buy from the same brand (Source: 2018 Harris Poll Auto TechCast).

The award-winning Uconnect system has led the industry in content and exclusive features since its inception in 2003 and the fifth generation continues the momentum.

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## Auto Dealer Helps Homeless Get Warm Shelter

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) – A North Carolina car dealer is opening up his sales lot to homeless people whose cars are their only means of shelter.

James Charles made the move after a member of his sales team went to repossess a woman's car, WBTV reported Jan. 28.

"The gentleman who was repossessing the car said, 'We can't take the car, there's somebody living in the car,'" said Charles, manager at Kiplin Automotive Group in west Charlotte.

Charles said he looked for a shelter for the woman but all of them were full.

So he put her up in a hotel for a few nights, until she had a more permanent solution.

That, Charles said, was the sign he needed to launch his plan.

His dealership now offers space for other families, with security cameras, bright lights and an open invitation.

"You can come here," Charles said. "We will allow you to stay on our property, and of course, we're going to help you find a place if we can."

The situation reminded Charles of when his own family was homeless for 30 days after a rental fell through when they first moved to Charlotte.

"The person who owned the house decided to sell it, and didn't let us know," Charles said. "There we were. Six kids and a dog, and no place to live."

Charles now works to help people in a similar plight.

"I know what we can do right now. We have tons of space," he said. "And we know people are doing it. We know for a fact that people are living in their cars temporarily."

## Fords 'Driving Skills for Life' Educates Young Drivers

Knowing how to operate heavy equipment saves lives and money – and a car is heavy equipment owned by the average consumer.

So, in a fast-paced world increasingly filled with technology, Ford Driving Skills for Life continues to provide free hands-on and online training to thousands of newly licensed drivers across the globe, said Ford spokeswoman Stefanie Dunham.

Now in its 17th year, Ford Driving Skills for Life is expanding its 2020 U.S. tour to offer more than 80 safe-driving training sessions in 18 cities across the country. The tour kicked off Jan. 25-26 at Manheim Auto Auction in Orlando, Fla., Dunham said.

Ford Driving Skills for Life captures teen and parent interest with safe driving clinics that pair newly licensed drivers with professional driving instructors and address critical factors influencing teen crashes: vehicle handling, hazard recognition, speed, space management, distraction and impairment.

The clinics focus on skills and information not currently offered in standard driver education courses.

"Despite progress in recent years, teens continue to be over-represented in motor vehicle crashes and fatalities across the country and vehicle crashes continue to be the leading cause of death for newly licensed drivers," said Jim Graham, global manager, Ford Driving Skills for Life.

"We look forward to continuing and expanding our efforts to help reduce the number of crashes and fatalities through real-world training and improved decision-making skills. Working with all of our partner organizations we believe we are making a substantial contribution to safer driving."

As new technology and mobility options continue to emerge, Ford Driving Skills for Life training also highlights the role vehicle technology can play in saving lives, in addition to addressing issues surrounding the relationship between cyclists and drivers, safe use of electric scooters and safety protocol for using ride-sharing services, Graham said.

The program will further adapt its curriculum this year to address disparities between beliefs and actions among Generation Z drivers.

A 2019 global survey commissioned by Ford Driving Skills for Life found 65 percent of United States and 79 percent of Canadian Gen Z drivers agree that using a mobile device while driving is a

serious offense and should result in severe punishment if a driver is convicted of using such a device while driving.

Yet 62 percent of U.S. and 58 percent of Canadian Gen Z drivers still do it. Ford Driving Skills for Life will work to raise awareness of these and other alarming disparities to help minimize risky Gen Z driving behaviors, Graham said.

Working in the U.S. with its national partner, the Governors Highway Safety Association, the Ford Driving Skills for Life tour will reach Alaska, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia this year. In addition to the hands-on driving

clinics, a free online "Academy" is available for teens and parents at [drivingskillsforlife.com/academy](https://www.drivingskillsforlife.com/academy).


"Teen and new driver inexperience often result in dangerous behaviors such as speeding, alcohol use and not wearing a seat belt – all of which contribute to increased risk for new drivers," said Jonathan Adkins, executive director, Governors Highway Safety Association.

"For this reason, the association and State Highway Safety Offices are looking forward to bringing this powerful program to even more teens and their parents – coast to coast and around the globe."

For more information and updates on tour locations, visit [www.drivingskillsforlife.com](https://www.drivingskillsforlife.com).




Ford Driving Skills for Life is expanding its 2020 tour to offer safe-driving training classes in 18 cities.



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## Expensive New Prices Drive Used Market

DETROIT (AP) – The average sale price of a new vehicle hit a record of just over \$39,000 late last year, a figure that chased many buyers out of the market and into used vehicles, which could set a sales record.

The shift to used, aided by millions of late-model vehicles coming off two- and three-year leases, is good for consumers who can get well-equipped cars, trucks and SUVs for far less than new ones. But it could be bad for automakers, with many industry analysts expecting new-vehicle sales to fall in 2020.

Consumers bought an estimated 40.4 million used vehicles last year, likely passing the old record of 40.2 million set in 2018, according to figures from the Edmunds.com auto pricing site. Edmunds, which provides content to AP, won't call it a record until final numbers arrive sometime in mid-February.

At the same time, new-vehicle sales dropped 1.3 percent to just over 17 million last year, and some industry analysts are predicting they'll fall into the mid-16 millions this year.

"This affordability issue is sort of scaring consumers away" from new vehicles, said Charlie Chesbrough, senior economist at Cox Automotive, which includes Kelley Blue Book. "You have this sort of competition out there of used vehicles that is offering an alternative to people who are looking for value."

Chesbrough expects new-vehicle sales to fall to 16.6 million this year, while Standard & Poors analyst Nishit Madhani predicts 16.4 million "amid a wave of used autos hitting the market and high sticker prices on new cars." S&P sees a further decline to 16.3 million for the following two years.

If a buyer with good credit bought an average new vehicle

for \$39,000 and put \$2,000 down, they would borrow \$37,000. That sum, at about 6 percent interest for six years, would bring a monthly payment of just over \$600.

Since many lenders limit auto buyers to a payment of 15 percent of their income, the lowest-income buyer who could afford the average price would have to make over \$48,000 per year, said Matt Dundas, finance director for Carvana, an online used-vehicle sales company.

"That's approaching the U.S. median household income of just over \$60,000, and even then, you're still right up against lender limits," Dundas said. "Ideally the average person wouldn't be right up against the line."

The lower prices make late-model used vehicles more attractive. Last year, Edmunds estimated the average used vehicle cost \$20,533. A 3-year-old one cost an average of \$22,571. Borrowing \$20,000 for six years would cost an average buyer about a \$340 monthly payment.

Price isn't the only reason buying used is becoming more attractive. Automakers, dealers and sites like Carvana offer used vehicles with warranties and maintenance records, sometimes calling them "certified pre-owned."

"I think we're making it not as scary to buy a used car," Dundas said. "It's in great shape, it's clean and I'm dealing with a legitimate company," he said.

A record 2.8 million certified pre-owned vehicles were sold last year, according to Cox.

Aundrya Richardson, an emergency dispatcher in the Atlanta area, could have afforded a new car but knew she shouldn't spend more than \$30,000 while trying to recover from financial problems. She decided in early

January to buy a silver 2016 Toyota Corolla with 25,000 miles on it for about \$15,000.

"I'm going to look for something that's lower but still a reliable vehicle," she said. "I wasn't really in a position to be super-picky. Maybe I'll get what I want next time."

As demand falls, the industry could be forced to increase incentives such as cash rebates and low-interest financing, and ultimately that could bring new vehicle prices down.

The average new vehicle sales price, including taxes, fees and automaker incentives, hit a record of \$39,028 last November, according to Cox. But as demand from individual buyers ebbed in December, dealer discounts grew to 7 percent of the sticker price, the highest level since the financial crisis in July of 2009. That drove the average price down to \$38,948, according to Cox.

Richard Bazy, owner of three Pittsburgh-area Ford dealerships, said automakers like Ford are going to have to keep up low interest loans and cash offers to keep new vehicle sales strong.

Still, there are forces working against lower new-vehicle prices. People still buy SUVs and trucks, which accounted for 69 percent of U.S. sales last year. Trucks and SUVs generally are more expensive than cars, so that drives up the average sale price.

Also, people still want the latest safety and infotainment technology, says Chesbrough, and they are willing to spend to get it. Automakers are differentiating their new vehicles from even 2-year-old ones by adding more driver assist and safety features as well as bigger navigation screens and other technology.

"All of that is going to force these vehicle prices to continue to creep up," Chesbrough said.







# Cadillac Super Cruise Sees Enhanced Technology in 2021

Just because something is “Super” doesn’t mean that it can’t be improved on. At least that’s what the people at Cadillac think.

An enhanced version of the Super Cruise driver assistance feature will be introduced starting on the 2021 Cadillac CT5 and CT4 and followed by the new 2021 Cadillac Escalade, said Cadillac spokesman Patrick Sullivan.

Among the enhancements will be automated lane change functionality, which will allow the hands-free system to change lanes on compatible highways when requested by the driver and certain conditions are met.

“This is our most extensive update we’ve made to Super Cruise since its debut,” said Mario Maiorana, Super Cruise chief engineer. “We have made a number of improvements to make Super Cruise more intuitive, better performing and more accessible for our customers. In addition to the automated lane change functionality, we’ve made improvements to the user interface and hands-free driving dynamics.”

The enhancements to Super Cruise were made possible by General Motors’ new digital vehicle platform, which provides more electrical bandwidth and data processing power, Maiorana said.

When Super Cruise is engaged, the driver can either tap or fully latch the turn signal to indicate that they would like to change lanes. This will prompt the system to look for an acceptable opening in the indicated lane, while also taking time to let other cars know that a lane change is imminent.

If the system determines that the indicated lane is open, the vehicle will merge into said lane. The driver attention system will continue to require the driver to

focus on the surroundings during the lane change.

Upon initiation, the gauge cluster will display messages letting the driver know when the automated lane change has begun, or if lane change is unavailable and changing lanes must be manually completed by the driver.

The system will display messages, such as “looking for an opening” or “changing lanes” to keep the driver informed on the status of the lane change.

“In order to add automated lane change and provide our customers with the same level of confidence that they currently have in Super Cruise, we made improvements to both our software and hardware,” said Maiorana. “This included improving rear-facing sensors and advanced software algorithms so that the system can confidently track vehicles approaching from the rear. As a result of these improvements, we are able to ensure that Super Cruise will hold in its current lane and only change when a sufficient gap exists.”

Super Cruise’s advanced technologies, including precision LiDAR map data and real time GPS, help to provide a detailed understanding of the surrounding road to determine allowable automated lane change maneuvers.

An array of camera and radar sensors will continuously scan around the vehicle to determine if an acceptable opening exists, allowing the vehicle to complete the lane change.

The combination of these technologies and Super Cruise’s driver attention system ensures a confident execution of the automated lane change.

In addition to automated lane change, other Super Cruise enhancements include updates



Enhanced Super Cruise will include automated lane change, which allows hands-free lane changing.

designed to improve performance and ease-of-use. Updates include:

- Addition of richer map information to enable automated lane change and improved functionality through turns and highway interchanges.
- Improved software for better steering and speed control.
- Enhancements to make it easier and more intuitive for drivers to engage the system.

These updates are just the latest and most significant in a series of enhancements made to Super Cruise since it launched in 2017.

Most recently, Cadillac expanded the availability of Super

Cruise to more than 200,000 total miles of compatible highways in the United States and Canada.

Enhanced Super Cruise with automated lane change will be an

option on the 2021 CT4 and CT5 sedans and the 2021 Escalade when those vehicles become available in the second half of 2020.

## Manufacturer 3M is Facing Trade, Chemical Troubles

by MICHELLE CHAPMAN  
AP Business Writer

A profound slump in manufacturing and a trade war that has slowed economic growth in China has led to a second round of layoffs at 3M, the Minnesota company that, in addition to Post-it notes, makes industrial coatings and ceramics.

The 1,500 job cuts come less than a year after the company announced 2,000 layoffs.

The latest round equates to about 1.5 percent of 3M’s global workforce, and CEO Michael Roman said the cuts will occur across all business groups and geographies.

“Organic growth company-wide in the fourth quarter was minus 2.6 percent, in line with our guidance,” Roman said in a conference telephone call with analysts. “We continued to face softness in certain end markets, namely China, automotive, and electronics, which impacted overall growth.”

Earlier this month, the Institute for Supply Management reported that U.S. manufacturing activity fell to the lowest level in more than a decade.

A survey by the association of purchasing managers found that companies are uncertain about trade and are seeing weak demand for their products from abroad.

The manufacturing sector last year was rocked by slower global growth and the escalation of trade tensions between the United States and China.

President Donald Trump signed an initial agreement with China in the month of January that may ease some of the drag caused by tariffs and threats of additional import taxes.

However, the spread of a new virus in China threatens to hammer the nation’s economy, and possibly others as the disease spreads in that country.

The Chinese government, in reaction to the spread of the virus, has quarantined the affected areas.

The number of people affected by this move is more than 50 million.

3M, a Dow component, is also wrestling with the environmental clean-up associated with some of its products, including PFAS.

PFAS chemicals are used in fire-fighting foam, nonstick pots and pans, water-repellent clothing and many other household and personal items.

They are nicknamed by scientists as “forever chemicals” because they persist in the environment.

Studies have associated certain PFAS chemicals with increased risk of cancer and damage to organs such as the liver and thyroid.

3M booked a pre-tax charge of \$214 million in the fourth quarter related to those environmental efforts.

3M Inc. earned \$969 million, or \$1.66 per share, in the fourth quarter. Its adjusted profit was \$1.95 per share, far from the per-share earnings of \$2.10 that industry analysts had expected, according to a survey by Zacks Investment Research expected.

Revenue totaled \$8.11 billion, just shy of Wall Street forecasts.

3M also makes virus masks and in response to the spreading coronavirus in China, which has now killed at least 106 people, 3M is rapidly increasing production.

The United States government chartered a plane to fly out diplomats from the U.S. Consulate in Wuhan, China, where the outbreak started, and other Americans.

China has cut off access to Wuhan and 16 other cities to prevent people from leaving and spreading the virus further around the country and around the world.

“We’re seeing increased demand for our respiratory protection products and we’re ramping up our production worldwide in China, around the world, to meet that demand,” Roman said. “At the same time, we’re seeing what everybody else is seeing, that there’s – businesses are shutting down, extending their shutdown beyond Lunar New Year so we’re really watching day-to-day what that’s going to mean for our outlook for China.”

The stock market has noticed all of this activity and that has affected 3M.

The price of shares of 3M, which have fallen 14 percent over the past year, slid an additional 5 percent on the day of Jan. 28.



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# Chevy Has Truck Trim Level For Lovers of the Outdoors

For those who use their pickup trucks to travel around the great outdoors, Chevrolet has a way to show off what you use your truck for.

Chevrolet and Realtree have uncovered their newest outdoor truck collaboration: the 2021 Silverado Realtree Edition.

The limited-run truck brings together the rugged capability of Silverado 1500 Custom Trail Boss with exclusive graphics from Realtree, the world's leading camouflage brand. This is the second collaboration between the two brands, following the success of the 2016 Silverado Realtree Edition, said GM spokesman Monte Doran.

"The Silverado Realtree special edition is tailored for people who are passionate about being outdoors," Doran said. "For them, the Realtree special edition pairs the off-road hardware of the Trail Boss models with the personalization of Realtree camouflage accents. The resulting truck would blend right in at the fish camp, the trailhead, or anywhere else their passion takes them."

"Silverado continues to offer customers more choice and capability where it counts," said Bob Krapes, director of Chevrolet Truck Marketing. "Building on the popular Custom Trail Boss model, the new Realtree Edition offers hunting and fishing enthusiasts a truck perfectly matched to their passions."

Like all Trail Boss models, the Realtree Edition will be equipped with a 2-inch factory suspension lift, 20-inch black wheels with Goodyear Wrangler Territory MT On-Off Road Tires and the Silverado's Z71 Off-Road Package, which includes monotube Rancho shocks, Hill Descent Control, automatic locking rear differential, skid plates and an AutoTrac 2-speed transfer case.

The Realtree Edition also includes the 5.3L V8 engine with a 6-speed transmission and is available with the 6.2L V8 that will provide an SAE-certified 420 horsepower and 460 lb.-ft. of torque, paired with a 10-speed automatic transmission.

Realtree camouflage graphics are featured on the exclusive ex-

terior, as well as the interior door trim, while the Realtree logo is integrated on the standard bedliner.

These outdoor-ready touches are accompanied by black Silverado and Z71 badging, black rectangular dual-exhaust tips, 4-inch black round assist steps and all-weather floor liners. The truck, said Krapes, is also equipped with Silverado's Durabed, which offers the most standard cargo capacity in the segment, 12 standard tie-downs and a high-strength, roll-formed steel bed floor.

"Having worked closely with Chevrolet all these years, it's great to see the team come out with the new 2021 Silverado Realtree Edition using our latest Timber pattern," said Realtree Designer and President Bill Jordan. "You don't realize how much goes into building a true performance truck until you look behind the scenes, and this new



This 2021 Silverado has a custom exterior that features camouflage markings from Realtree.

truck will mean so much to all outdoor enthusiasts."

The 2021 Silverado Realtree Edi-

tion was on display at the 2020 SHOT Show in late January and will be available for sale at Chevrolet

dealerships in summer 2020, Doran said. Pricing on the trim will be announced closer to production.

## Hybrids Fighting for Market Share in Growing EV World

(AP) – Buying a hybrid in 2020 doesn't have the same cutting-edge feel that it used to back in the early 2000s, said Ryan Zumallen of Edmunds. Today, all the hype surrounds the latest electric cars.

But do a little research and you'll find that hybrid vehicles are better than ever and provide impressive fuel economy with little to no compromise, Zumallen said. As a bonus, many of the latest hybrids no longer take several years to "break even" in terms of cost versus fuel savings. thfive top-rated hybrids in a variety of styles, singled out by the experts at Edmunds, that quickly recoup their initial costs. All prices below include the destination charge.

**2020 Ford Fusion Hybrid.** Starting MSRP: \$28,995. The Ford Fusion Hybrid presents a familiar problem for hybrid shoppers – it costs a significant amount more than the gasoline-powered version, to the tune of several thousand dollars, Zumallen said. But if you look to the top end, that isn't the case. While the standard Fusion Titanium has an MSRP of

\$35,445, the Fusion Hybrid Titanium costs \$35,590 \_ an increase of just \$145.

If you drive a lot of city miles, that difference will quickly become irrelevant. The Fusion Hybrid has an EPA rating of 43 mpg in the city, double the gas Fusion's rating of 21 mpg city. Over the course of owning the vehicle, it will deliver thousands in savings thanks to a low upfront cost.

**2020 Honda Insight.** Starting MSRP: \$23,885. Edmunds' top pick for hybrid cars is the Honda Insight, a small sedan that hits the efficient marks hybrid drivers want. Perhaps more importantly, it avoids the pitfalls they

don't want. The Insight is not strange-looking, it isn't adorned with eco-conscious badges, and it isn't slow. It just works.

We especially like that the Insight combines its fuel economy with excellent value. In fact, in its Touring trim, the Insight has an MSRP that's \$500 lower than the comparable Honda Civic on which it is based – and its EPA rating of 48 mpg in combined city/highway driving exceeds the Civic's 36 mpg.

**2019 Kia Niro.** Starting MSRP: \$24,535. Kia sells the Niro as a hybrid, a plug-in hybrid and a fully electric vehicle. At an MSRP of \$24,535, the Niro hybrid is easily

the most affordable of the three, and its EPA rating of 50 mpg combined is among the highest you'll find on the market. We also like the Niro's interior comfort and standard technology.

There's no gasoline-only version of the Niro, so making a comparison is a little tricky, but Kia's Sportage crossover SUV is a good stand-in. The two offer similar amounts of storage space, especially with the rear seats folded down. Go with the Niro and you'll pay \$90 less than a comparable 2020 Sportage and get nearly double the fuel economy. The Sportage checks in with just 26 mpg combined.

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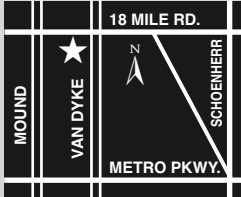
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# Greater Options Now Available for Fans of the Diesel Truck

U.S. consumers will have more fuel-efficient options in the most popular vehicle segments in 2020.

This January brings the first full year of opportunity to invest in diesel engines in America's most popular vehicles – full-size half-ton pickup trucks, along with new options in the SUV segment, said Allen Schaeffer, executive director of the Diesel Technology Forum.

“Since 1980, full-size pickup trucks have held the ranking as the most popular, highest-selling vehicles in the U.S. for American families and businesses alike,” he said.

“This new year will be the first full year of a fuel-efficient diesel option available from all manufacturers in that segment in those top-ranked vehicles,” said Schaeffer.

“Diesels are a very natural fit for the half-ton pickup and full-sized SUV segment, just as they have been a mainstay option in the heavy-duty pickup truck segment for nearly four decades.

“The diesel enables manufacturers to provide consumers with a no-compromise vehicle experience: power, performance, driving range, towing capability and more fuel efficiency, all in a larger vehicle.”

“Among the choices, the Ram 1500 EcoDiesel and the Chevy Silverado 1500 Duramax diesel already have impressive recognition and industry awards under their belt. And rounding out the lineup of new diesel options in pickup trucks coming later in 2020 is an all-new-for-2021 Jeep Gladiator with the 3.0L EcoDiesel option.

“Second only to full-size pickup trucks, sport utility vehicles (SUVs) are the most popular and fastest-growing vehicle segment in the U.S., so the availability of a fuel-efficient diesel engine option is welcome news,” Schaeffer said.

“Diesel options in this segment boost the utility factor with extended driving range and new towing capabilities along with easy access to fueling. Diesel options provide more ‘no-compromise’ utility and performance that consumers increasingly demand.”

In this segment, 2020 is off and running with five exciting new

## Alabama Expands Seaport For Auto Tonnage

MOBILE, Ala. (AP) – A new project at Alabama's main seaport will open the facility to the shipment of finished automobiles.

The Alabama State Port Authority said Jan. 23 it had signed a deal to build a \$60 million automotive terminal in Mobile.

It's supposed to be ready early next year and will allow for vehicles to easily roll on and off of ships.

The 57-acre terminal will be able to handle 150,000 vehicles annually with connections to rail service and highways, officials said.

Mercedes-Benz, Hyundai and Honda currently make cars in the state, and Mazda-Toyota is building a factory in north Alabama.

A docks official said the new terminal will open a new business stream for the docks.

The project is a joint venture between Terminal Zarate, S.A., a Grupo Murchison company based in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Neltume Ports, based in Santiago, Chile.

Mobile is the nation's 11th-largest deepwater seaport handling more than 58 million tons of cargo annually, the port authority said.

diesel options for consumers in popular SUVs with recent announcements by General Motors' Chevrolet and GMC divisions of the 2021 Chevrolet Suburban and Chevrolet Tahoe and GMC Yukon and Yukon XL, Schaeffer said.

All new products will offer the all-new 3.0L Duramax turbodiesel engine option that already has some impressive accomplishments in the 2020 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 pickup truck where the Duramax diesel posted EPA highway fuel economy performance of a record 33 mpg for a half-ton truck, said Schaeffer. Jeep also debuts the 3.0L EcoDiesel option in its iconic and popular Jeep Wrangler Unlimited Rubicon in 2020, he said, achieving an EPA rated 29 mpg in highway driving.

New diesel options becoming available will deliver more benefits for their owners in the form of fuel savings that translate into fewer greenhouse gas and other emissions, delivering clean air benefits across the economy, Schaeffer said.

According to recent research from IHS Markit commissioned by the Diesel Technology Forum, consumers choosing a diesel engine option in full-size half-ton pickup trucks can achieve on average 33 percent more miles per gallon (24 mpg diesel vs. 18.1 gasoline, combined fuel economy), saving about 200 gallons of gasoline every year.

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2020 Ram 1500 EcoDiesel



2020 Silverado Diesel

# Coronavirus is Causing HAVOC With the Global Economy

by PAUL WISEMAN and MARTHA MENDOZA  
Associated Press

China's worst health crisis in years has sparked fear and uncertainty for businesses from North America to Asia that depend on trade in the affected region.

Experts say it's too soon to know how disruptive the crisis will prove. But it's already having an impact.

McDonald's has shuttered restaurants in five Chinese cities, including the inland port city of Wuhan where the crisis is centered. Shanghai Disneyland has temporarily closed as a precaution. Restrictions on travel and fears of flying to the region are threatening to depress demand for oil and jet fuel just as China's Lunar New Year is beginning.

In a sign of China's vast economic reach, even niche companies in America have begun feeling squeezed. In Houston, Rockstar Wigs worries that production delays in China will hold up shipments. Omaha, Neb.-based Home Instead Health Care has stopped sending caregivers to the homes of elderly clients in Wuhan.

So far, as of Jan. 24 there are 830 confirmed cases of the virus and 26 deaths. Health experts expect those numbers to increase as time goes on. Wuhan and 12 other Chinese cities are on lockdown, isolating a combined population of more than 36 million.

“Personally, I now cannot go to Wuhan to negotiate new orders, meet with new vendors, take foreign companies for supplier visits, and visit trade shows,” said Stanley Chao, a consultant in Rancho Palos Verdes, Calif., who helps foreign companies do business in China. “I may lose three to five trips to China, which is my bread and butter. In turn, my team in China cannot work, and I may have to temporarily lay them off for a while.”

The growing fears over the virus rattled financial markets last week. The Standard & Poor's 500 stock index endured its worst day since early October and snapped a two-week winning streak. The S&P index fell 0.9 per-

cent after having been down as much as 1.3 percent earlier. Shares in airlines and other companies in the travel and tourism industries, which stand to be among the hardest-hit sectors if the crisis worsens, fell sharply.

So far at least, the virus appears to be less lethal than the SARS outbreak of 2003, which killed hundreds, though it is too soon to say for sure. And Beijing has apparently been more forthcoming about the health risks this time, leaving less room for panic-inducing rumors to take hold.

“The authorities are sharing more information,” said Kent Kedl, partner at the consultancy Control Risks responsible for Greater China. “They’re getting out in front of it.”

Moreover, because the outbreak coincides with the Lunar New Year holiday, many businesses are closed as tens of millions of migrant workers return from big cities to their hometowns in the countryside.

Still, Wuhan is a central hub for China. Isolating the region could devastate Chinese production in automobiles, aviation, high-tech mechanical and electrical manufacturing, said Ahmed Rahman, an economist at Lehigh University.

“Its central role in facilitating exchange between the Chinese hinterlands and the rest of the planet cannot be overstated,”

Rahman said. “Arguably, out of all the regions of China, closing off Wuhan may be the most disruptive to the global economy.”

Many businesses are scrambling to contain the potential damage.

“... closing off Wuhan may be the most disruptive to the global economy.”  
– Ahmed Rahman, Lehigh University Economist

Ford, General Motors and Fiat Chrysler all have restricted travel to Wuhan and other parts of China affected by the virus. Most auto factories, though, remain closed for the Chinese New Year and haven't been affected yet. Ford said in a statement that it has a special team monitoring the situation.

Fiat Chrysler has banned corporate travel in areas locked down by the Chinese government due to the virus, while GM has restricted travel to all of Chi-

na unless it is “business critical and approved in advance,” a company statement said.

The outbreak arrives just after the United States and China reached a truce in an 18-month trade war that involved the two world's two biggest economies burying each other's products in tariffs.

Stuart Shulman, president of Synchronis Medical in Ann Arbor, said the Wuhan shutdown is “the double whammy.” Already reeling from tariffs that have devoured as much as 30 percent of his profits, he now may not have any workers at the Chinese factory where medical gowns are cut and sewn.

“The timing is so catastrophic. I don't think a lot of people understand the situation,” Shulman said. Because workers have left for the new year holiday, they may not be able to get back to work.

Restrictions on travel and fears about flying to the region could take a toll on demand for oil, gasoline and jet fuel. The suspension of public transportation services and quarantine enacted last week could cause a short-lived oil demand drop of 50,000 to 70,000 barrels per day in the Hubei province, according to an analysis from S&P Global Platts.

The SARS outbreak in 2003 led to a drop of 300,000 barrels of oil per day during the height of the epidemic.

# Auto Traffic Drives Savannah Port's Growth

SAVANNAH, Ga. (AP) – The amount of cargo moving through Georgia's seaports reached record levels in the past year, in part because of continued growth fueled by larger ships traversing the expanded Panama Canal, the Georgia Ports Authority's top executive said Jan. 28.

The state-operated ports in Savannah and Brunswick handled a total of 38.5 million tons (34.9 million metric tonnes) of imports and exports in calendar 2019, the agency reported. That's an increase of 4.3 percent compared to last year.

A boost in automobile exports also helped to grow Georgia's

cargo volumes last year. GM and Volvo began exporting vehicles through Savannah last year, with Volvo also shipping cars through Brunswick. Overall, the ports moved more than 657,000 cars, trucks and tractors, up 2 percent from 2018.

The number of cargo containers, large metal boxes used to ship goods from consumer electronics to frozen chickens, moving across the docks at the Port of Savannah also reached record highs last year. The port handled 4.6 million container units through December, up 5.6 percent from 2018.

Griff Lynch, the port authori-

ty's executive director, attributed much of the 2019 growth to the expansion of the Panama Canal that opened nearly four years ago. He said shippers are still increasing the size of the vessels using the route, funneling more cargo to the East Coast.

“On the container side, I think it still comes down to the expansion of the canal,” Lynch said. “We're still enjoying the fruits of that.”

Savannah is the fourth-busiest U.S. port for shipping containerized cargo, behind only the Port of New York and New Jersey, and the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, California.





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