

Detroit Auto Scene®

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We Put a Face on the American Auto Industry

MARCH 23, 2020

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The normally-packed parking lot at FCA's Sterling Stamping plant was empty after FCA, like GM and Ford, shut down production at all the company's manufacturing facilities in North America.

Huge Social Media Initiative Begun by Detroit Auto Scene

The current COVID-19 crisis is changing the way a lot of businesses are operating, and *Detroit Auto Scene* is no exception.

To better serve our readers, we are taking a deep dive into social media in order to get our content out.

"Our Instagram and Facebook presence will enable our readers to better interact with the newspaper," said Harley Nunley, the person in charge of social media at *Detroit Auto Scene*.

"The paper can also be accessed by going to our Web site at <http://detroitautoscene.com>," Nunley said.

"This will open up the lines of communications," Nunley added. "People can ask us questions and they can even post information on our Facebook page and even instant message me, and can comment on the pictures on our Instagram account."

Nunley said that accessing the pages should be easy. Simply go to Facebook or Instagram and type in "Detroit Auto Scene."

"Our new Facebook page is a business page," Nunley said. "People shouldn't confuse it with a personal page that is also under 'Detroit Auto Scene.' I would also like to say that these efforts are a work in progress and that we would really appreciate any feedback from readers on how we can build our social media efforts."

Detroit Auto Scene publisher William Springer II said that the newspaper is committed to this effort and that it will usher in a whole new era for the nation's oldest free newspaper.

"We are grateful to our loyal readers, advertisers our heritage and followers at *Detroit Auto Scene - Tech Center News*," Springer said.

"The newspaper will remain in print. If you are in the readership area of our print edition, pick up a copy of *Detroit Auto Scene*."

Detroit Auto Scene began in 1933 as *New Center News* in Detroit's uptown business district. *Tech Center News* commenced in 1976.

GM and Ford Offer Expertise To Make Medical Ventilators

The COVID-19 outbreak may have shut down vehicle production in North America, but it also has Ford and General Motors returning to their medical roots.

Several media outlets have reported that GM and Ford are in talks with the White House on how they can help during this medical emergency.

In an email to the *Detroit Auto Scene* on March 19, GM spokesman Dan Flores wrote that GM's "engineering and manufacturing expertise could help with this issue, but no decisions have been made and we have nothing to announce."

CNN received a statement from Ford on March 18, declaring "As America's largest producer of vehicles and top employer of autoworkers, Ford stands ready to help the administration in any way we can, including the possibility of producing ventilators and other equipment. We have had preliminary discussions with the U.S. government and are looking into the feasibility."

The is not the first time GM have become involved in the development of medical equipment.

The GM Heritage Center noted in online its history of the company that GM has made significant contributions to society extending far beyond the automobile industry. One of these important contributions was the development of the first mechanical heart pump in 1952.

Dr. Forest Dodrill, a surgeon at Wayne State University's Harper Hospital in Detroit, believed that a machine could be developed to temporarily replace the human heart's blood-pumping function and make open heart surgery possible. Dr. Dodrill and his medical team called on a group of scientists and engineers at the GM Research Laboratories for help.

That unique collaboration resulted in the Dodrill-GMR Me-

chanical Heart, built by GM Research Laboratories in the public interest and funded in part by the American Heart Association. Measuring 10 by 12 by 17 inches, the invention looked similar to a 12-cylinder engine with six separate chambers.

**"As America's
largest producer
of vehicles
and top employer
of autoworkers,
Ford stands ready
to help the
administration
in any way
we can . . ."**

**— Ford Motor
Company**

Made of stainless steel, glass and rubber, the mechanical heart used air pressure and vacuum pumps to circulate blood from the chambers through the patient's body while open heart surgery was being performed.

In the fall of 1952 the heart pump was first used successfully during a surgery performed on a 41-year-old man. The operation lasted 80 minutes and the mechanical heart was used for 50 minutes to keep the patient alive while his heart was repaired.

"We've come a long way since that first heart operation by Dodrill in 1952. Now, it's estimated that worldwide more than one million open heart operations are done using some form of heart-lung machine each year," said Dr. Larry Stephenson,

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Virus Shuts Down Detroit 3

by Jim Stickford

In a rapidly-changing environment, Detroit automakers and the UAW agreed to close down production of all facilities in North America – the United States, Canada and Mexico – on March 18.

This decision was the latest in a series of moves by the compa-

nies and the union to protect workers and the public from COVID-19, also known as the Coronavirus.

On Sunday, March 15, FCA, Ford and General Motors issued a joint statement declaring that they had formed a COVID-19/Coronavirus Task Force to implement enhanced protections for manufacturing and ware-

house employees at all three companies.

"Workplace health and safety is a priority for us every day, all three companies have been taking steps to keep the COVID-19/coronavirus out of their facilities and during this national emergency, we will do even more

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Gaylor points at a computer screen to show Estes where quality may be gained in the design of FCA cabins.

FCA Employee Hard Judge of Cabin Quality

When Victor Gaylor walks into an assembly plant, he is judge and jury.

He looks and listens and, if he finds evidence linking a vehicle component to a customer concern, he holds court, said FCA spokesman Eric Mayne.

"We put it on trial to see if it's guilty," says the veteran FCA quality auditor.

This no-nonsense, product improvement approach recently won FCA a docket full of favorable verdicts from a pair of third-party quality watchers, Mayne said.

"We're not holding anything back," says Mark Champine, head of Quality, FCA – North

America. "Every day, we are striving to deliver a superior ownership experience for our customers."

Gaylor, who has been with the company since 1998, is one of two FCA employees to take home an RT5 Leadership Award from Shainin, a global engineering service company specializing in root-cause investigation and professional development.

He earned the prize by spearheading a project that reduced cabin noise by 24 percent in the popular Dodge Durango SUV and in its legendary line-mate from FCA's Jefferson North Assembly Plant, the award-winning Jeep Grand Cherokee.

"I am probably more critical than anyone," Gaylor says. "I like a quiet cabin and I think our customers deserve a quiet cabin."

But his project didn't end with the product, Mayne said. A colleague "decided I could take it a step further," he adds.

That colleague was Jud Estes, a quality engineer and "Master Black Belt Instructor" – the highest of four certifications awarded through the industry-standard Six Sigma quality improvement process.

Estes challenged Gaylor not only with reducing cabin noise, but with training his team mem-

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view this week's edition at DetroitAutoScene.com

GM's Homegrown EV Technology Coming Soon



Kwiatkowski is excited to help lead the charge toward EV cars.

by Jim Stickford

GM's recent unveiling of the company's plan to spend \$20 billion in EV development and launch several new EV models in the next few years as been a long time coming.

"We've been in the electric vehicle business for 25 years, between the development of batteries and propulsion systems," said Adam Kwiatkowski, executive chief engineer for Electric Vehicles at GM. "We've been working very hard to knock down the dollar per kilowatt barrier and working hard to reduce the amount of precious metals in our batteries. We've enjoyed success doing that. We've reduced the amount of cobalt that goes into our Ultium batteries by 70 percent."

Additionally, the EV reveal held at the Tech Center in early March also emphasized the modularity of GM's new EV designs, Kwiatkowski said.

"We're talking about one motor family that is capable of propelling front-wheel drive (FWD), all-wheel drive (AWD) and rear-wheel drive (RWD) vehicle configurations," Kwiatkowski said. "These flexible architectures actually let these vehicles be built like something akin to toy brick cars. One configuration might need, say six batteries, so we plug in six. Another might need eight, so we plug in eight."

The batteries themselves have been constructed so that they can fit into the different architectures.

That makes manufacturing much easier and allows General Motors to really ramp up production by taking advantage of the ability to increase the scale of production, Kwiatkowski said.

This is possible because of GM's joint battery manufacturing venture with LG Chem allows them to make the batteries the size and shape they need just for their vehicles and it also gives them leverage in the global supply chain, Kwiatkowski said.

"We have people around the world looking to purchase supplies," Kwiatkowski said. "Right now the sky's the limit because we're making our own battery cells. They buy the mines needed for precious metals, they can buy chemical factories if that's the best move."

And just as GM, in the Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) space makes a lot of the parts for its vehicles. The company can do the same for its EV production, Kwiatkowski said. Right now GM casts 100,000 tons of parts for its vehicles every year.

"We maintain a strong footprint in manufacturing ICE vehicle," Kwiatkowski said. "We will do the same when it comes to EVs."

Part of GM's strategy in developing its own EVs is keep design and engineering in-house, Kwiatkowski said. That allows the company to be flexible in the creation of new vehicles and even allow the Ultium battery technology it develops to be leased out to other companies as a way to generate additional revenue.

And the first new EV to be introduced will be the GMC HUMMER EV, which will be revealed on May 20 of this year and built in Michigan at General Motors' Detroit-Hamtramck assembly plant.

And that is just the beginning, Kwiatkowski said. Chevrolet, Cadillac, GMC and Buick will all be launching new EVs starting this year. The next new Chevrolet EV will be a new version of the Bolt EV, launching in late 2020, followed by the 2022 Bolt EUV, launching Summer 2021.

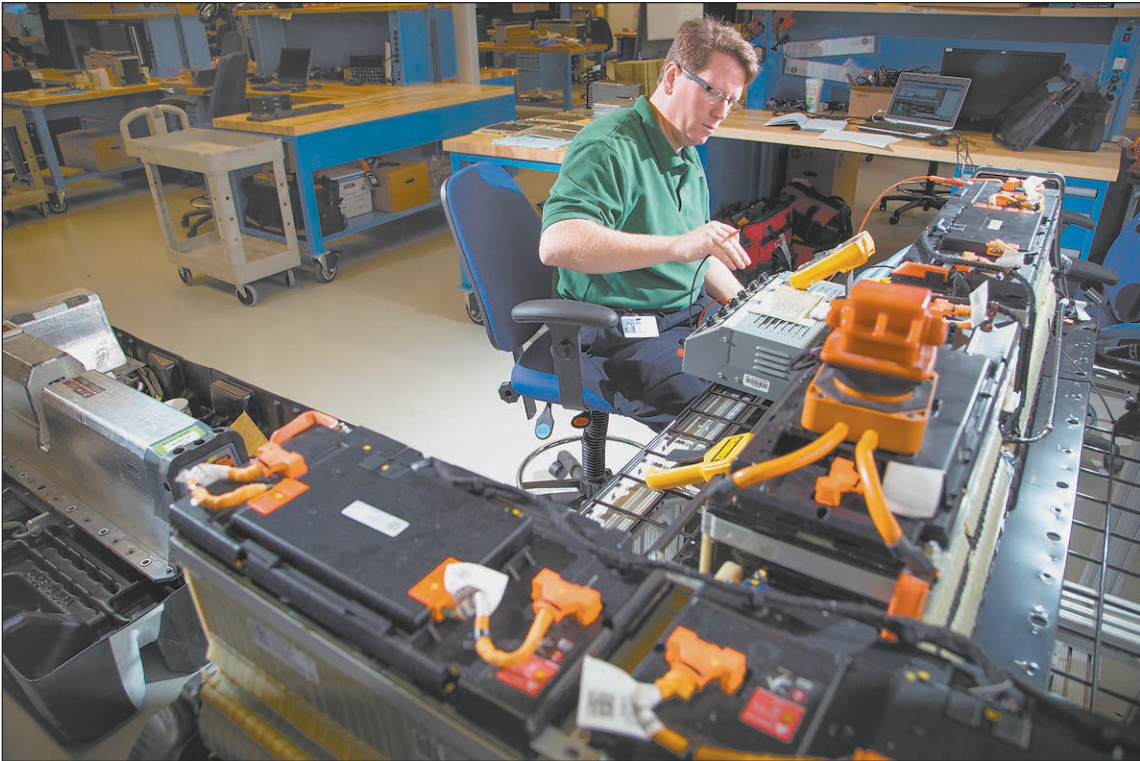
The Bolt EUV will be the first vehicle outside of the Cadillac brand to feature Super Cruise, the industry's first true hands-free driving technology for the highway, which GM will expand to 22 vehicles by 2023, including 10 by next year.

The Cruise Origin, a self-driving, electric shared vehicle, shown to the public in January 2020 in San Francisco, was the first product revealed using GM's third generation EV platform and Ultium batteries. Next will be the Cadillac Lyriq luxury SUV in April. Details about its launch will be shared then.

The reveal of the Ultium-powered GMC HUMMER EV will follow on May 20. Production is expected to begin in Fall 2021 at GM's Detroit-Hamtramck assembly plant, GM's first assembly plant 100 percent dedicated to EV production.

This aggressive launch of EVs will let GM take advantage of rising customer acceptance, Kwiatkowski said. Third-party forecasters expect U.S. EV volumes to more than double from 2025 to 2030 to about 3 million units on average. GM believes volumes could be materially higher as more EVs are launched in popular segments, charging networks grow and the total cost of ownership to consumers continues to fall.

"This is an exciting time to be working for GM," Kwiatkowski said. "I got my engineering degree from Cornell and have been working for GM since I graduated in 1997. I grew up on the New Jersey Shore. But my family has always been a GM family since my grandfather Jim bought his first Chevrolet in 1927. I always wanted to work here, and now I am. I started on ICE designs and



GM has been developing new EV battery technology for the better part of a decade.

switched to EV in 2016. The most exciting part of my work is seeing just how fast the technology we're working on is being developed and produced."

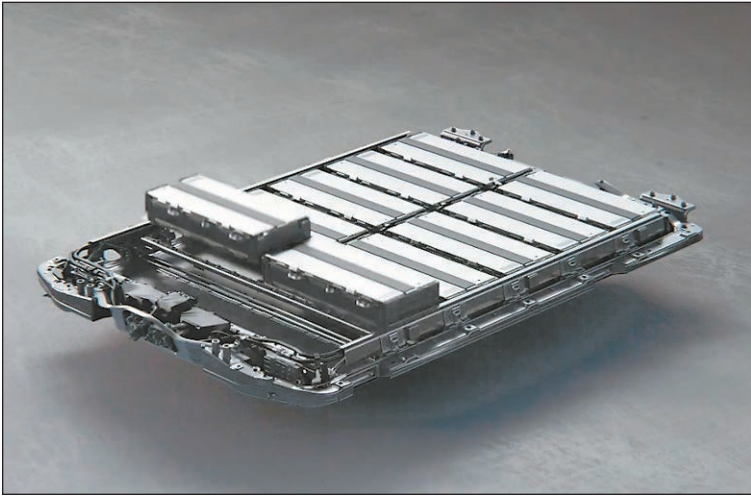
Kwiatkowski said that the company's new modular architecture delivers for customers.

Important facts to remember include:

- The same platform and propulsion system can power affordable transportation, luxury vehicles, work trucks and high-performance machines.
- Vehicles built on this modular platform will offer a GM-estimated driving range of up to 400 miles or more on a full charge, 0 to 60 mph acceleration as low as 3.0 seconds, and a battery energy storage ranging from 50 to 200 kWh.
- GM plans 19 different battery and drive unit configurations initially, including horizontal and vertical stacks, to power vehicles ranging from affordable cars and crossovers to luxury SUVs and pickup trucks.
- Motors designed in-house will support FWD, RWD, AWD and performance AWD applications.
- Space-efficient packaging that maximizes room for passengers and cargo.
- In North America, GM EVs will be powered by rectangular, pouch-style battery packs that are simple, light weight and space-efficient.
- GM's ability to stack batteries vertically is unique in the industry and it allows for a flat cabin floor and more interior room than comparable EVs that use cylindrical battery packs.
- The pack also allows engineers to deliver vehicles with an optimized weight distribution and a lower center of gravity to improve ride and handling.
- A unique, low cost battery chemistry and easy to manufacture design.
- GM's new Ultium batteries will have the highest nickel and lowest cobalt content in a large format pouch cell.
- Large format pouch cells require less wiring and plumbing than small cylindrical cells.



GM's Brownstown facility is making the company's batteries for EVs.



By making the batteries modular, GM can fit them in many platforms.

- Our battery management system is built in, which eliminates 80 percent of the battery pack's wiring compared to the Bolt EV.
- GM's joint venture with LG Chem to develop and mass produce battery cells will drive cell costs below \$100 per kWh. Ongoing technological and manufacturing breakthroughs will drive costs even lower.
- GM's EV battery cells will be mass produced at a \$2.3 billion joint venture plant that GM and LG Chem plan to build in Lordstown, Ohio.
- The plant, which will be about the size of 30 football fields, will have annual capacity of more than 30 gigawatt hours and room for expansion.
- Site assessments and the permitting process are underway, and groundbreaking is expected to occur in the spring of 2020.

- The joint venture is expected to create more than 1,100 new, good-paying jobs.
- New technologies under development to improve charging, cycling, range, cost and battery life include:
 - Zero cobalt and zero nickel cathodes.
 - The use of electrolyte additives to heal cell "scratches" that reduce cycling.
 - Solid state batteries.

When the GMC HUMMER EV truck is finally introduced to the public for viewing, the vehicle will showcase the GMC brand's design and engineering potential, and will feature, among other things:

- 1,000 horsepower;
- 11,500 lb-ft of torque;
- 0 to 60 mph in 3 seconds.

"GMC builds premium and capable trucks and SUVs and the GMC HUMMER EV takes this to new heights," said Duncan Aldred, vice president of Global Buick and GMC.

Virus Closes Detroit 3 Manufacturing

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working together,” said Gamble, who convened the leaders of all three companies. “We are focused on doing the right thing for our people, their families, our communities and the country. All options related to protecting against exposure to the virus are on the table.”

But events soon overtook these actions. On Tuesday, March 17, it was confirmed that a GM employee working out the Cole building in the Warren Tech Center was confirmed to have contracted the virus.

Later that day, a Ford employee working out of the company’s Building 5 in Dearborn was also confirmed to have contracted the disease.

On Wednesday, March 18, FCA confirmed that an employee at the company’s Sterling Heights Assembly Plant (SHAP) had contracted the virus.

As a result, the three automakers and the UAW again got together to discuss the best way to handle the crisis. The union stated that leadership “has strongly requested that the Big 3 automakers cease production for the next two weeks to safeguard our members, the workforce that makes their products and our communities.

“We spent hours tonight (March 17) in talks with the leadership of the Big 3, demanding that they do the right thing for our members. All three companies have agreed to new measures that will increase adherence to CDC recommendations on social distancing in the workplace.

Most importantly, all three companies have agreed to review and implement the rotating partial shutdown of facilities, extensive deep cleaning of facility and equipment between shifts, extended periods between shifts, and extensive plans to avoid member contact.”

By the end of Wednesday, March 18, all three Detroit automakers revealed plans to shut down production at all their facilities until the end of March.

GM stated the suspension will last until at least March 30. Production status will be reevaluated week-to-week after that.

“GM and the UAW have always put the health and safety of the people entering GM plants first, and we have agreed to a systematic, orderly suspension of production to aid in fighting COVID-19/coronavirus,” said GM CEO Mary Barra. “We have been taking extraordinary precautions around the world to keep our plant environments safe and recent developments in North America make it clear this is the right thing to do now. I appreciate the teamwork of UAW President Rory Gamble, UAW Vice President Terry Dittes and local leadership as we take this unprecedented step.”

“UAW members, their families and our communities will benefit from today’s announcement with the certainty that we are doing all that we can to protect our health and safety during this pandemic,” said UAW President Rory Gamble. “This will give us time to review best practices and to prevent the spread of this disease. We appreciate General Motors’

actions today and will continue to work with them on health and safety plans to be implemented when we resume production.”

Ford stated that following the evening shifts of March 19, the company would temporarily suspend production at its manufacturing sites in North America to March 30 to thoroughly clean its facilities to protect its workforce and boost containment efforts for the COVID-19 coronavirus.

“We’re continuing to work closely with union leaders, especially the United Auto Workers, to find ways to help keep our workforce healthy and safe – even as we look at solutions for continuing to provide the vehicles customers really want and need,” said Kumar Galhotra, Ford’s president of North America. “In these unprecedented times, we’re exploring unique and creative solutions to support our workforce, customers, dealers, suppliers and communities.”

The media release further stated that UAW and Ford leaders will work together in the coming weeks on plant restart plans as well as exploring additional protocols and procedures for helping prevent the spread of the virus. Chief among them: finding ways to maximize social distancing among plant workers – both during work hours and at shift change, when large numbers of people typically gather at entry and exit points and maximizing cleaning times between shift changes.

FCA’s media statement said working with the UAW and listening to the concerns of our people, the company has agreed to

cease production at FCA plants across North America, starting progressively from today through the end of March.

While production is paused, the company will put actions into place to facilitate the steps agreed to through the joint task-force set up between the UAW and the automakers. Through this period, which the company will re-evaluate at the end of this month, FCA will work to enhance its manufacturing operations to facilitate the changes agreed with the UAW including shift timings, structures and enhanced cleaning protocols.

Commenting on this action, FCA CEO, Mike Manley said: “Working with the UAW, and having visited many of our plants yesterday, we need to ensure employees feel safe at work and that we are taking every step possible to protect them. We will continue to do what is right for our people through this period of uncertainty.”

New Ventilators From GM, Ford?

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Wayne State University cardiothoracic surgeon and medical historian, in a press release in 2002. “Without some form of blood pump or heart-lung machine, many of the heart operations we routinely do would not be possible.”

The success of the Dodrill-GMR Mechanical Heart began a wave of research and medical advances that still continue.

Toughest Judge Of FCA Cabins Works There

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

bers to achieve “Black Belt” problem-solver status. Through similar initiatives spanning four decades of refining everything from seat cushions to Formula One pistons, Estes estimates he has helped increase the world’s population of Black Belts by 10,000.

But Estes doesn’t just go by the book when it comes to quality improvement processes, Mayne said. He goes by several books, from Shainin and Six Sigma, to Kepner-Tregoe.

“The assembly of these tools into the FCA system is unique,” Estes says, himself the winner of the 2019 Shainin Medal, presented by the American Society for Quality (ASQ).

The honor stems from his development of “Reverse Group Comparison,” which deconstructs a system – component by component – and measures the incremental benefits of each.

Estes says it seeks to answer the question: “What are the ingredients I could put into the recipe to make it better?”

Joining Gaylor as a 2019 RT5 Leadership Award winner is Rodrigo Espinoza, who led a training and certification initiative for FCA in Mexico. FCA’s body engineering group earned Shainin’s Bottom Line Improvement Excellence Award for its work on enhanced headlamp performance.

This effort helped the 2020 Ram 1500 become the first pickup truck to get a rating of Top Safety Pick+ from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

COVID-19 Virus Keeps Detroit Automakers, UAW Jumping

by Jim Stickford

Thursday, March 12. The wire service Reuters reported that FCA officials confirmed that an employee at the company’s Kokomo transmission facility in Indiana had the COVID-19 virus.

The automaker stated that the employee was receiving medical care and his immediate co-workers and anyone else who may have come into contact with him were placed in home quarantine. This was first confirmed case of an employee of FCA, GM and Ford being confirmed as having the virus, but it wasn’t the last.

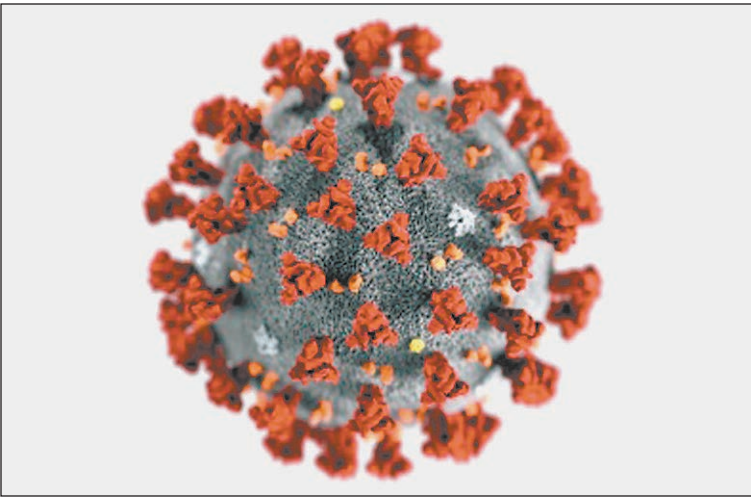
Sunday, March 15. In a joint statement, the UAW, FCA, GM and Ford stated that are “are forming a COVID-19/Coronavirus Task Force to implement enhanced protections for manufacturing and warehouse employees at all three companies.

“UAW President Rory Gamble, GM Chairman and CEO Mary Barra, Ford Executive Chairman Bill Ford and President and CEO Jim Hackett, and FCA CEO Michael Manley will lead the task force.

“They will be supported by Terry Dittes, vice president; UAW-GM Department; Gerald Kariem, vice president, UAW-Ford Department; Cindy Estrada, vice president, UAW-FCA Department. The medical staffs, and the manufacturing and labor leadership teams at all three companies.”

Tuesday, March 17. Media outlets reported that an employee working out of GM’s Cole building (formerly known at VEC) in Warren Tech Center was confirmed to have the COVID-19 virus.

In a statement to the media, GM officials wrote “Since January, we have been taking decisive action around the world to prevent the spread of coronavirus because the health and safety of our employees and everyone who enters our facilities is our top priority. We learned late yes-



The COVID-19 virus

terday that an employee who works at the Cole Engineering Center in Warren has tested positive for the virus.

“We have been in contact with the family and put our emergency response plan into action, which builds on the preventive measures we have already taken, which include directing employees at the Cole Technical Center and other sites to work remotely if possible.

“In addition, our medical team will be contacting individuals who may have had direct contact at work with the affected employee. They will be directed to self-quarantine for 14 days and the GM medical team will help them coordinate care if they develop symptoms.”

That same day, Ford reported that an employee who works in the company’s Building 5 in Dearborn had tested positive for the Coronavirus.

Ford spokesman T.R. Reid said that the company learned of the situation late on Monday, March 16, and that this “person was exposed after having left the office several days ago and was diagnosed before returning,” Reid said. “The person was working remotely, coincidentally. The person is in quarantine and getting

medical attention. There was no risk of exposure in any Ford facility.”

After these revelations, the UAW issued a statement to its members and the media stating that the union “has strongly requested that the Big 3 automakers cease production for the next two weeks to safeguard our members, the workforce that makes their products and our communities.

“We spent hours tonight (March 17) in talks with the leadership of the Big 3, demanding that they do the right thing for our members. All three companies have agreed to new measures that will increase adherence to CDC recommendations on social distancing in the workplace. Most importantly, all three companies have agreed to review and implement the rotating partial shutdown of facilities, extensive deep cleaning of facility and equipment between shifts, extended periods between shifts, and extensive plans to avoid member contact.”

FCA, in a statement to the media, said “Following several days of proactive discussions with our UAW partners focused on providing a safe environment for our employees, we have agreed that

in addition to our extensive current protocols to protect our employees, FCA will implement a series of shift pattern and production changes across our manufacturing plants in the United States.”

Ford announces that the company will be shutting down all its European manufacturing operations. This idles facilities in Spain, Romania, Germany and Croatia.

Wednesday, March 18. FCA shuts down production at the company’s SHAP facility, after an employee is confirmed to have the virus.

The Detroit News reported Fiat Chrysler Automobiles on March 18 suspended production at its Sterling Heights Assembly Plant a second time in less than 12 hours after an employee there tested positive for coronavirus.

The shutdowns came after a task force made of officials with the United Auto Workers and Detroit’s three automakers met into the evening of March 17 about how to continue production amid the pandemic.

Ford announces in the afternoon that following March 18 evening shifts, “Ford is temporarily suspending production at its manufacturing sites in North America through March 30 to thoroughly clean its facilities to protect its workforce and boost containment efforts for the COVID-19 coronavirus.”

Shortly after Ford’s announcement, GM confirmed “confirmed it will begin a systematic orderly suspension of manufacturing operations in North America due to market conditions, to deep clean facilities and continue to protect people. The suspension will last until at least March 30. Production status will be reevaluated week-to-week after that.”

“GM and the UAW have always put the health and safety of the people entering GM plants first, and we have agreed to a systematic, orderly suspension of production to aid in fighting COVID-

19/coronavirus,” said GM Chairman and CEO Mary Barra.

FCA was the final Detroit automaker to shut down production. In a statement to the media, FCA declared “Working with the UAW and listening to the concerns of our people, we have agreed to cease production at our plants across North America, starting progressively from today through the end of March. While production is paused, the company will put actions into place to facilitate the steps agreed to through the joint task-force set up between the UAW and the automakers.”

Local media reported that a worker at Binson’s Medical Equipment and Supplies in Center Line near the GM Tech Center in Warren has tested positive for COVID-19 (coronavirus), the company said in a statement to the public.

Thursday, March 19. Ford Motor Company is offering eligible new car buyers up to six months of payment relief under a new “Built to Lend a Hand” program developed with its dealers.

This week, Ford met with dealers throughout the country, asking what they and their customers need most. The answer was clear – payment support for existing and new customers affected by coronavirus, plus tools to help serve their customers remotely.

Under the new program, Ford is offering up to six months of payment relief for eligible new car customers who finance through Ford Credit. Ford will pay for three months and customers can defer for up to three months for a total of up to six months.

The program is for those purchasing new 2019 and 2020 model year vehicles, excluding 2020 F-Series Super Duty.

“Our dealers are incredibly connected to their communities,” said Kumar Galhotra, president, North America.

Society of Automotive Engineers Cancels 2020 Congress

by Jim Stickford

The Coronavirus has come to Michigan, and that has affected how major employers in the auto industry are doing business.

In an email to the Detroit Auto Scene, GM spokesman Dave Barnas wrote, “Please know the health and safety of our employees is the highest priority. The following information below provides the latest guidance on our corporate travel (air) policy, along with our revised visitor guidelines. Additionally, we are providing employees with regular guidance to outline the steps each of us can take to help to protect our own health and safety and slow the spread of COVID 19.

This includes:

- Making antibacterial hand soap, wipes and hand sanitizer available, and
- Utilizing virtual tools to help facilitate larger group meetings and keep us working efficiently.

He further stated that new GM visitor guidelines have been initiated.

“We are implementing new visitor protocols at all GM sites to keep our employees and all those who visit our locations safe. As the coronavirus disease outbreak continues to evolve and spreads globally, GM Medical and Security are monitoring the situation closely and will periodically update guidance based on the recommendations from the CDC and WHO. The latest information regarding these new procedures can be found at GM.com/coronavirus.”

Company Guidance Regarding Travel:

- We are monitoring the situation closely and periodically updating company guidance regarding travel restrictions.

Based on current recommendations from the Center for Disease Control and the World Health Organization, GM recently implemented the following travel changes: Travel Bans (no travel to these locations unless it is an employee’s primary work location) – China, South Korea, Italy and Japan.

“All additional domestic and non-domestic air travel requires senior leader approval.”

FCA spokesman Mike Palese, in an email to the Detroit Auto Scene, stated that FCA placed re-

strictions on travel. Employees need to secure leadership team approval. And we have asked that the limit travel to essential business.

Michelle Collins, a spokeswoman for BorgWarner, wrote in an email that “BorgWarner’s Auburn Hills offices are open. We continue to monitor the situation to ensure the health and safety of our employees. Travel is restricted to level 3 countries as identified by the CDC.”

According to the Associated Press, the auto industry isn’t the only American industry affected by the spread of the Coronavirus. They reported:

TURBULENCE IN THE AIR: Europe’s airports say they expect 187 million fewer passengers this year due to the virus outbreak, which is “turning into a shock of unprecedented proportions for our industry.” The ACI Europe, which represents the sector, estimated Tuesday that the outbreak will mean a 13.5 percent drop in airport passengers in the first quarter alone. That translates to 1.32 billion euros (\$1.5 billion) in lost revenue. Airports in Italy, where a nationwide quarantine was put in place Tuesday, are most affected. Some 9,172 people have been infected in Italy, and 463 have died.

“What they are now bracing for is a total collapse in air connectivity and the prospect of losing most of their revenues,” said Olivier Jankovec, Director General of ACI Europe. He called on the Italian government to provide emergency financial support, and said that might be necessary across the EU if more authorities clamp down on travel.

Airlines continue to slash capacity as travelers cancel flights or avoid them all together. American Airlines cut international capacity by 10 percent for the summer Tuesday and will trim domestic capacity by 7.5 percent next month as millions second guess vacations or business travel. The airline is suspending flights between Los Angeles and mainland China and Hong Kong for the entire summer. It suspended flights between Philadelphia and Rome immediately Tuesday. That hold will remain in place through the end of April.: Delta Air Lines on Tuesday cut international capacity by 20 percent to 25 percent and will reduce domestic capacity by 10 percent to

15 percent. It also announced a hiring freeze and is offering employees voluntary leave.

United Airlines, Delta Air Lines and American Airlines are allowing passengers to rebook tickets through April 30 without paying fees.

Finnair continues to alter its flight schedules. Finland’s national carrier this month announced temporary layoffs of between 14 days up to one month for its entire staff based in country, affecting more than 6,000 employees. The carrier, which as cancelled 1,400 flights, said Tuesday that it would cancel flights to and from Bologna, Stuttgart, Split, Umea in Sweden, and Venice for the entirety of April.

THE FED AND BIG BANKS: The Federal Reserve and other regulatory agencies are encouraging financial institutions to meet the needs of customers affected by coronavirus. They vowed to give them the regulatory leeway to do so. “Prudent efforts that are consistent with safe and sound lending practices should not be subject to examiner criticism,” the Fed said in a prepared statement along with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Office of the Comptroller General.

THE FED AND THE PRESIDENT: President Donald Trump has repeatedly demanded that the Federal Reserve do more to aid the economy, especially in the face of the coronavirus outbreak. On March 10, Trump called the Fed “pathetic” and “slow moving” in a tweet for not cutting interest rates as low as other central banks have. He asserted that its failure to do so has put the United States at a competitive disadvantage. “The Federal Reserve must be a leader, not a very late follower, which it has been!” Trump said in a second tweet.

The Fed slashed its benchmark rate by a half-point last week – the largest cut since the 2008 financial crisis – to a very low range of 1 percent to 1.25 percent. And most Fed watchers expect further rate cuts in coming weeks. In contrast to Trump, most economists say rate cuts aren’t likely to do much to stem the economic damage from the spreading coronavirus, which has disrupted factory supply chains and pummeled service industries like airlines and tourism companies.

HEALTHCARE: Humana is waiving out-of-pocket costs associated with COVID-19 testing for patients who meet CDC guidelines at approved labs. The Louisville, Kentucky, health insurer also said it would increase the availability of telemedicine to cut down on potential exposure for those it insures. Telemedicine costs for all urgent care needs is being waived for the next 90 days. The company says it will allow early prescription refills for the next 30 days so members could stock up for extended periods. Humana is opening up a support hotline for members to call with specific questions about coronavirus, telemedicine options and other questions.

THE WORKPLACE: A worker at Boeing’s Everett, Wash., facility has tested positive for COVID-19. The employee is in quarantine and co-workers who’ve been in close contact with the individual have been asked to self-quarantine and self-monitor, the company said. The company previously told employees in the Puget Sound area to work from home. Washington state at one point had the highest number of people infected with the coronavirus, prompting the tech industry that is heavy in the area to roll out travel and work restrictions.

The Florida Department of Health says three employees of a company that greets cruise ship passengers have tested positive for the new coronavirus. Officials are urging anyone who recently traveled through Port Everglades to isolate themselves for 14 days if they start experiencing symptoms. A 69-year-old Broward County woman tested positive for COVID-19, the third employee of Metro Cruise Services to become infected. The advisory asks anyone who passed through the port recently and begins to experience symptoms such as coughing, fever and shortness of breath to isolate themselves and call their health care providers.

Santander, Spain’s largest bank, ordered its employees in Madrid to work from home for the next two weeks on Tuesday and told shareholders to participate remotely, or vote beforehand, in the April 3 annual shareholders’ meeting on April 3.

The 2020 Ford Expedition Gets Family Honors

U.S. News & World Report has named the 2020 Ford Expedition as the Best Large SUV in its “2020 Best Cars for Families” report.

The publication stated that families today look a lot different than they did 20 or 30 years ago, and so do family cars.

“Today you can choose from spacious hybrids, SUVs, sedans, and vans filled with safety features, and tech to keep everyone connected and entertained.

“Of course, with all those options, it can be tough to find the right family car for your household. The Best Cars for Families awards cover nine different automotive classes and shine the spotlight on the cars, SUVs, and vans that truly make family life a little easier.”

In the review of the 2020 Expedition, U.S. News editors and judges wrote that “Yes, the Ford Expedition is a great large SUV. It’s pretty much the entire package.

“Under the hood is a muscular turbocharged V6 engine that rivals the horsepower of competitors’ V8s, and well-rounded performance includes balanced handling and a pleasing ride. Inside, the Expedition has one of the most spacious cargo holds in the class, as well as three rows of roomy, comfortable seating. Infotainment features are user-friendly, and the cabin is full of quality materials. Because it has the best combination of cargo and passenger space, safety and reliability ratings, positive reviews from automotive journalists, and available family-friendly features in its class, we named the Expedition our 2020 Best Large SUV for Families.

“Anyone shopping for a full-size SUV will want to take a look at the Expedition. It’s one of the most spacious and modern vehicles in the class, but with a starting price of almost \$53,000, it’s also one of the most expensive. Ford also offers the Expedition Max, an extended-wheelbase model that boasts a larger cargo hold.

Editors said for those looking to spend a little less money but want similar passenger and cargo space, consider the Chevrolet Tahoe and GMC Yukon.

Ford Creates New Financial Aid Packages

Building on years of helping communities during times of need, Ford is working to help customers affected by the developing coronavirus outbreak.

“Ford is committed to lending a hand to the people who rely on us,” said Mark LaNeve, v. p., U.S. marketing, sales and service. “The peace of mind of our Ford and Lincoln customers is our top priority as we work through the developments of this outbreak.”

Ford Credit has long helped customers impacted by local and federal disasters, said LaNeve. Now, existing Ford Credit customers in the U.S. affected by COVID-19 who purchased or are leasing vehicles are encouraged to contact Ford Credit to discuss options if they are having payment difficulty. For example, they may be able to change a payment due date or delay a payment.

Customers are encouraged to access their Account Manager profile either online at accountmanager.ford.com or through the FordPass app; visit http://www.fordcreditsupport.com/ or call a special hotline – 1-800-723-4016 – to discuss options, said Ford spokeswoman Margaret Mellott.

In addition, Ford Credit is offering a program giving customers who buy new vehicles

the option to delay their first payment for 90 days.

Ford Credit has also launched an ad campaign beginning on March 16 to raise awareness of the new program.

“We want to make sure that anyone who needs assistance knows it’s available,” said Marion Harris, chief executive officer, Ford Motor Credit Company.

In addition, the Ford Motor Company Fund, Ford’s philanthropic arm, is providing assistance to nonprofit organizations meeting critical community needs, said Mellott. As an initial step, Ford Fund is directing more than \$500,000 to help nonprofit groups in southeast Michigan and will support delivery of food to senior citizens and to thousands of children who do not have access to school meals while schools are not in session.

The two Ford Resource and Engagement Centers in Detroit are serving as drive-up food pantry distribution centers. Ford Fund also is supporting Detroit-area nonprofits that provide shelter to families and other at-risk people. In addition, Ford Fund is exploring how employee volunteers can assist nonprofits that are short-staffed, Mellott said.

In other parts of the U.S., Ford Fund is redirecting funds to sup-

port food programs for children no longer in school. It also is launching an emergency aid program with the UNCF (United Negro College Fund) to help students with financial difficulties at historically black colleges and universities get home following the sudden closure of some of these institutions.

“We are immediately targeting resources to ensure that the most vulnerable people are being cared for during this unprecedented situation,” said Mary Culler, president, Ford Fund.



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GM's Making Executive Changes

While the COVID-19 virus and its effects on the automotive industry recently, it wasn't the only news being generated by GM. The company made some changes to the company's senior executive staff. The new appointments are effective April 1, said GM spokesman Pat Morrissey.

Matt Tsien, currently executive vice president and president, GM China, is appointed to the position of Executive Vice President and Chief Technology Officer, replacing Jon Lauckner, who has elected to retire effective July 1, Morrissey said. In his new role, Tsien will report to GM President Mark Reuss.

Tsien has led GM's operations in China since Jan. 1, 2014. During his time in China, GM achieved unprecedented growth of business and brought in the technologies that would enable the company's long-term growth in China, especially in electrification and connectivity.

Tsien began his professional career at Delco Electronics in 1976 as an electrical engineer, where he designed and released embedded software for automotive applications and led advanced work in navigation and telematics.

Between 1995 and 2000, Tsien worked in Australia and China in various technical, program management and planning assignments. In China, he was chief technology officer and director of Business Planning.

In 2001, he moved to GM North America Product Development as executive director of Vehicle Systems. Tsien joined General Motors Global Engineering in 2005 as executive director of Global Technology Engineering.

Tsien became executive vice president of SAIC-GM-Wuling, GM China's manufacturing joint venture with SAIC and Guangxi Auto-



Matt Tsien



Craig Buchholz

mobile Group (the former Wuling Motors), in 2009. He was a member of the joint venture's Executive Committee and managed the company's Purchasing and Supply Chain Management organization in addition to Information Technology and its Technical Development Center.

Tsien has a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from the General Motors Institute (now Kettering University), a master's degree in electrical engineering from Stanford University and a master's degree in management from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Craig Buchholz, currently chief communications officer, Procter & Gamble, joins GM as Senior Vice President, Global Communications, replacing Tony Cervone, who has elected to retire effective July 1, 2020. Buchholz will report to GM Chairman and CEO Mary Barra.

Buchholz's biography on the Procter & Gamble Web site stated "Craig is charged with building and protecting the reputation of P&G and the company's portfolio of iconic brands. Under his leadership, the Global Communications team contributes to the P&G growth strategy by delivering communications superiority aimed at framing the company's narrative with consumers and key stakeholders."

Buchholz joins GM with extensive experience managing complex communications environments in multi-brand organizations. For the past six years, Buchholz has led P&G communications through a variety of challenging product and corporate issues.

Prior to P&G, he spent 20 years in the pharmaceutical world working in both agency and corporate environments, including with Merck, Johnson & Johnson and what is now Pfizer. In those companies, he held multiple leadership positions in corporate, internal and executive communications. He holds a law degree from Drexel University and bachelor's degree in Journalism and Public Relations from Temple University. Buchholz is also an Aspen Institute Fellow. Craig Buchholz bio

Julian Blissett, currently senior vice president, International Operations, is appointed Executive Vice President and President, GM China, succeeding Tsien.



Julian Blissett

In his new role, Blissett will report to GM President Mark Reuss.

Blissett was appointed GM senior vice president International Operations, in April 2019. He is responsible for GM's operations outside the Americas and China, including Korea, Australia, Southeast Asia, India and the Middle East, and reports to Steve Kiefer.

Prior to taking on his current position, Blissett served since 2014 as executive vice president of SAIC-GM and a member of the SAIC-GM Executive Committee.

A native of the United Kingdom, Blissett began his GM career in 1996 with Central Engineering at Opel Polska.

Before joining GM, Blissett worked at Nissan Motor Manufacturing U.K. Ltd. in manufacturing, engineering and production management in the U.K. and Japan.

Blissett holds a bachelor's degree in engineering and business studies from Sheffield Hallam University in the U.K.

Steve Kiefer, senior vice president and president, GM International, will continue in his current role and assume the day-to-day operations of GM's international markets currently handled by Blissett. Kiefer will continue to report to Reuss, Morrissey said.

"I'd like to thank Jon and Tony for their decades-long service to GM, and for the outstanding contributions they've made to the company," said Barra. "They've both played significant roles in positioning the company for long-term success, and I wish them all the best in retirement."

Volvo Orders Recall of 736,000 Cars

DETROIT (AP) – Volvo is recalling more than 736,000 vehicles worldwide because the automatic emergency braking system may not detect obstacles and stop the vehicles as designed.

The recall covers certain 2019 and 2020 S60, V60, S90L and V90 models.

The company says in government documents that a software-hardware incompatibility glitch causes the problem. If the system doesn't work as intended, it can increase the risk of a crash, Volvo said in documents posted March 18 on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Web site.

The company says it has no reports of crashes or injuries. In a statement March 18, Volvo says forward collision warning systems will work as designed, but there's a very small risk in certain environments and temperatures that the automatic braking system won't function properly.

Volvo will notify owners and dealers will update the software at no cost to customers. The recall is expected to start May 1 in the U.S., according to government documents.



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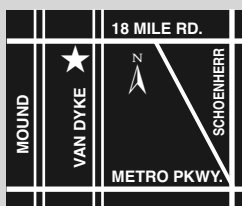
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GM Financial Department Helps During Virus Crisis

The spread of the Coronavirus has changed the way people are interacting.

Schools have been closed in Michigan and restaurants will take-out only starting March 16. Even the casinos have been ordered closed for two weeks.

That will have an affect on people's incomes, so GM Financial has issued some new rules to help with that situation.

GM Financial has created a special Web page to cover the situation. It is at gmfinancial.com/en-us/coronavirus.html.

The page states that GM Financial believes the "safety and well-being of our communities during COVID-19 is our top priority. Our thoughts go out to anyone who has been negatively impacted by this situation. We stand with you and are ready to help."

"The first step you can take is to make sure you have access to manage your account online 24/7. Register for MyAccount (gmfinancial.com/en-us/myaccount/login.html) or download the GM Financial Mobile app (gmfinancial.com/en-us/mobile.html). You can make payments online, view your due date or payment amount, enroll in Auto Pay, sign up for paperless billing and more."

The page goes on to state "To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, and in an effort to ob-

serve social distancing practices, we have limited the number of phone agents in our servicing centers. Hold times may be longer than usual. The good news - we still have many experienced customer advocates standing by ready to help you through our secure messaging channels.

"It may be easier and faster to reach us one of the following ways:

- Sign in to MyAccount and send a secure message. Go about your day, and we'll respond during normal business hours.
- Download and log in to the GM Financial Mobile app and message us just as you would in MyAccount.
- Text ASSIST to 53721 to start a text message with us.

"Need to discuss payment arrangements? Each customer's situation is unique and we're here to help. Please contact us to discuss your options. Message us or call 800-284-2271.

"You can always find more information about managing your account by visiting our FAQs (gmfinancial.com/en-us/resources/faq.html)."

Support hours are Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Central Time. Saturday hours are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Central Time. Sunday hours are closed.

New Federal AV Safety Regs

by TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) - The U.S. government is coming out with new regulations aimed at changing automotive passenger safety standards that could be barriers to autonomous vehicles.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says it's seeking comment on proposed updated standards to account for vehicles that don't have manual controls such as steering wheels or brake pedals. Autonomous vehicles also may not have drivers sitting in the traditional driver's seat.

The proposal would revise requirements and test procedures, the agency said in a statement Tuesday. It also would clarify that passenger protection standard standards don't apply to vehicles made specifically to carry goods and not people.

"We do not want regulations enacted long before the development of automated technologies to present an unintended and unnecessary barrier against innovation and improved highway safety," NHTSA Acting Administrator James Owens said in the statement.

The proposed regulation would apply front passenger seat protection standards to the traditional driver's seat of an autonomous vehicle, rather than safety requirements that are specific to the driver's seat, the agency said. "The rationale discussed in this notice is that an occupant should not need protection from a steering control system if none exists in the vehicle," the regulation said.

The regulations would account for vehicles that operate autonomously but also can be controlled by a human in the driver's seat, NHTSA said.

NHTSA says in the regulation that much of the safety potential of automated driving systems is "unsubstantiated" and the impacts unknown," but it still believes the best path forward is to remove barriers.

Jason Levine, executive director of the nonprofit Center for Auto Safety, an advocacy group, said NHTSA shouldn't remove

regulatory safeguards for a technology that is not proven "and in fact may be unsafe." He said in a statement that the government should focus on existing safety measures "not corporate giveaways desired by lobbyists and questioned by experts."

The public has about 60 days to comment on the proposal. Based on the comments, NHTSA would then put the rule into effect, the agency said.

The regulation is aimed at autonomous vehicles and does not address multiple recommendations from the National Transportation Safety Board made last month about partially automated vehicles with driver assist systems.

After several fatal crashes involving Tesla electric vehicles operating on the company's Autopilot driver-assist system, the NTSB recommended that NHTSA expand testing to make sure partially automated systems can avoid running into common obstacles such as a freeway barrier. The board also asked that NHTSA evaluate Autopilot to determine where it can safely operate, and to develop and enforce standards for monitoring drivers so they pay attention while using the systems.

NHTSA said at the time it will review the NTSB's report and that all commercially available vehicles require human drivers to stay in control at all times.

Police Don't Find Cause For Supplier Explosion

OGDEN, Utah (AP) - Investigators say they don't know what triggered an explosion that killed a man at an engineering business in northern Utah.

The *Standard-Examiner* in Ogden reported March 16 that police in Brigham City have completed their investigation into the March 10 blast at auto supplier HyPerComp Engineering but were unable to pinpoint a cause. Lt. Tony Ferderber says 33-year-old Alex Stoddard, who was the only one in the building at the time, was transferring oxygen from a larger tank to a smaller tank when something caused the explosion.

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